

# The **SMART** *A Magazine of Cleverness* **SET**

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# THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF  
CLEVERNESS

Manuscripts, to receive prompt attention, should be addressed, "Editor of SMART SET."

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MARK LEE LUTHER, Treasurer



## THE SMART SET FOR MAY

THE May issue will contain some features of wide and varied interest. It will entertain, amuse, surprise, thrill—but not offend good taste.

“The Assault of Wings,” contributed by **Charles G. D. Roberts**, is an aeroplane story—and a little different from anything that has yet appeared. An airman flies up to the top of a great mountain, and disturbs the peace of an army of eagles, who attack viciously what they regard as an intruding monster. A battle in the air between an aeroplane and a gigantic bird has been a favorite subject of speculation ever since man began to fly. Mr. Roberts’s wide reputation as a writer on animal life makes him peculiarly fitted to produce a thrilling story on this theme.

A play by **Arthur Pinero** is always a distinct landmark in dramatic history. Next month we will publish a one-act play by this distinguished dramatist which represents a rather different line from that of his usual work. It is entitled “The Widow of Wasdale Head,” and is a romantic comedy of great charm and dramatic force. It will undoubtedly rank as one of the literary features of the year.

“Prison-Made,” will be another story in the series of delicious satires begun by **Freeman Tilden** in a recent issue. These stories have won wide popularity, because they have shown up the ridiculous side of a lot of everyday frauds and have struck right home to every reader. This story will be followed by one satirizing bogus patriots, which will appear appropriately about the time the orators and spellbinders begin to make the eagle scream on Memorial Day.

“The House in Demetrius Road” will be concluded in the May number. This two-part novelette by J. D. Beresford is one of the most remarkable stories we have ever published. The scene is a small house on the outskirts of London; the action takes place almost entirely within its walls; the characters are domestic and unheroic in the extreme: yet the story



sparkles with interest and the action moves with the speed of a machine gun.

Readers who have not forgotten that they were once children will greet with many inward chuckles **Basil Macdonald Hastings's** story of a family of irrepressible children. "The Tribe," he fitly calls it, which is an entirely appropriate name for the sort of kids these are. They are Huckleberry Finns with a little polish. The second story of the doings of these very human children will appear next month, and the individual who can read it without a laugh is a confirmed killjoy.

**Bliss Carman** contributes to the next issue a long spring poem that, while retaining all the elements that have made spring poems an inspiration to joyousness since history's first winter snows melted upon the slopes of Parnassus, yet contains an element of newness that sets it apart from anything the spring magazines have been in the habit of publishing.

Some other May features will include:

"**One Man to Every Family,**" by Evelyn Gill Klahr—a story of "other people's business," in which, as usual, the officious friends and neighbors made a mess of it.

"**Forty Pounds of Gold,**" a story of Alaskan prospectors by George Catton, a new writer whose work gives promise of rivaling Jack London. This story is a thriller; it describes a man's supreme devotion to a favorite dog—and rather upsets some accepted beliefs regarding "man's best friend."

"**The Signor Seeks Adventure,**" by H. D. Couzens, a humorous tale of a great operatic tenor who fell among bandits and "put one over" on them.

"**In the Case of Bradner,**" by Hugh Irish. A story of a strong man, the victim of a terrible weakness, and how he fought a fight to a finish with the devil that possessed him.

"Passing the Love of Women," a romance, told in a delightful vein of fancy, by **Harriet Prescott Spofford**.

"**The Joke Towns of America,**" by George Jayenne. Oshkosh, Kalamazoo, Ypsilanti, Jersey City and others get into the limelight in this clever essay. The great cities of the East and the West have paraded their Great White Ways, their Barbary Coasts, their gilded palaces of lobsters and luxury before the admiring and envious of two continents, while these smaller but no less self-complacent metropolises of the hinterlands have had their glories advertised only to vaudeville audiences and readers of the comic weeklies. Here is their day come at last.

Lovers of poetry will find also some exceptional offerings in the May issue.





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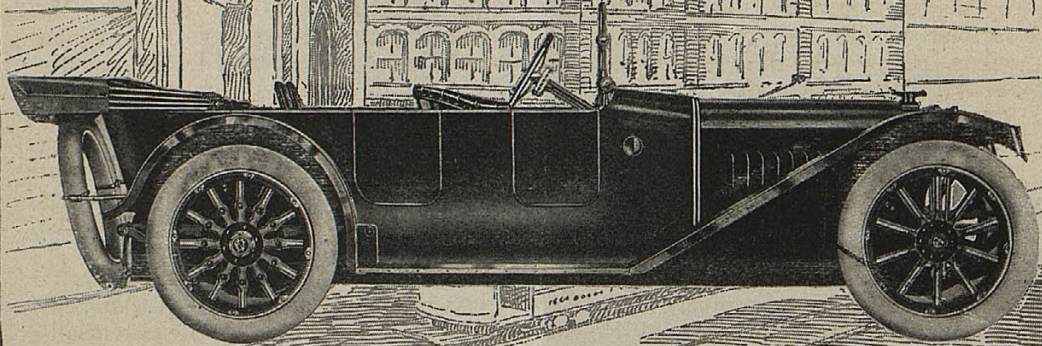
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# THE SMART SET

SMART—Clever; witty; acute; quick; lively.—*Webster's Dictionary.*

## THE HOUSE IN DEMETRIUS ROAD

By J. D. Beresford

EVERY house in Demetrius Road was severely separated from its neighbor by a strip of high fencing. Between fence and house on one side, a narrow path squeezed its way to a door invisible from the road, a door whose functions were clearly indicated by the advertisement "Tradesman's Entrance," labeling the side gate. The larger gate, in two leaves, that opened onto a path almost wide enough for a carriage drive, bore the name of the house on each post.

Martin Bond, conscious that he was a little late for his appointment, was irritated by the necessity for keeping an eye on each side of the road; irritated also, by the ostentation of the names that described so ill these modern suburban villas. They were all so recent, not only in material but in style. They showed the influence of the new movement in suburban architecture. No house was an exact replica of its neighbor. "Features" proclaimed themselves; a veranda borne on little stubby wooden columns, a flat segmental bay window, an excess of roof thrusting down to low walls apparently upheld by diminutive triangles of rough-cast buttress, each made some bid for distinction. But the names on the gateposts bespoke the individual tastes of owners uninfluenced by the spirit of the style. "Hatfield," "Oak-

leigh," "Carn Voel" were representative titles, varied occasionally by a "Nest" or "Retreat." Martin Bond had nearly reached the bottom of the road before he came to "Garioch."

Here, at last, was a more real distinction. In all this trim, elaborate newness, Garioch alone wore an air of neglect. Its gate stood partly open, its thirty feet of front garden was untended, the short curtains in the segmental bay window straggled untidily across the panes.

Martin hesitated with his hand on the rusty latch of the formal gates. The wind had swung the gate against him as he approached, but the latch was caught up and did not fall into its hasp. He fingered the twisted iron ring which served as a handle, and looked up depreciatingly at the slovenly brick and rough-cast front of Garioch. An eaves gutter had leaked and the plaster of the upper floors was marked with long brown streaks, where dribbles of stained water had run in a strange pattern like the sketch of an inverted tree.

It was all so unlike his picture of the house in which he was to find that brilliant young Scotchman whose potentialities had been so vividly painted by Waterhouse. And now it seemed to Martin in retrospect that he recognized for the first time certain hesitations and



reserves in Waterhouse's eulogy. Had there not been the shadow of some enormously qualifying "but" at the end of his every sentence, some hint of a vital contingency that had been abruptly clipped off before it found expression?

The three half-dead little firs, planted haphazard in the rough grass before the house, wagged their heads fiercely in the October wind. "If I believed in omens," reflected Martin, "I should certainly not go in. The gate bangs in my face and the trees shake their heads at me."

He pushed the gate open abruptly and walked up to the front door.

No answer came to his pressure of the little electric button, nor could he hear the tingling of any bell. He felt inclined to give up the attempt, even now; he could tell Waterhouse that he had called and found no one there. But he decided to go on. He lifted the brown knocker and tapped firmly half a dozen times.

The sound of a door opening somewhere within the house came to him, followed by a pause, and presently footsteps across the hall. Then came silence again, and Martin realized that he was being observed through one of the panes of colored glass in the upper panels of the door. At last the door was opened and thrown back with vigor. The key fell out of the lock and tinkled on the tiles of the floor.

A woman stood in the doorway.

"Well?" she said, staring at Martin.

"Is Mr. Greg at home?" he asked. "I've an appointment with him for four o'clock."

"Mr. Greg'll no be in," said the woman.

Martin misunderstood her idiom. "Not at all?" he asked. "He wrote to me to make an appointment. I've got his letter here."

"I said he'll no be in just now," replied the woman, still taking stock of the visitor, "but if ye have a letter that'll maybe make a difference. Ye've an honest face; ye can come in and wait."

She stooped down, picked up the key from the tiles and replaced it in the lock and then led the way into the hall beyond.

"I'll not be knowing when Mr. Greg'll be in," she said. "Will I get ye a cup of tea?"

"Oh, thanks very much," returned Martin, "but perhaps I'd better wait. Mr. Greg said he'd be in at four o'clock."

The room in which he sat down to wait was not in character with the outside of the house. Here was no hint of untidiness or neglect. On the other hand, it was too scrupulously neat. The piano was closed, and no litter of music sheets gave any suggestion that it was ever opened. The furniture had a certain solidity of structure and thoughtfulness of design that spoke of taste and pains in selection. Yet the whole room gave Martin an effect of desertion. It was so plainly a room in which no one lived. The fireplace was quite empty; the very bars at the bottom of the grate were scrupulously black-leaded.

Martin sat down in the window seat and stared out at the untidy front garden. His attention was held by the gate, which swung to and fro with a mournful shriek, or now and then, as if in a spasm of sullen temper, banged resentfully against its retaining post. By that gate, no doubt, Greg must enter, thought Martin.

He was young enough to be intensely resentful and impatient. His life at Cambridge had left him with a sense of his own importance in the world, and the fifteen months of journalism and settlement work which followed had presented differences of degree rather than of kind. "Curse this Greg fellow—I don't believe he's any good," was the uppermost thought in his mind.

He looked at his watch and found that it was a quarter to five. He got up and walked impatiently across the room, looking for the bell. He had done all that was necessary; he would leave a message and go. Then the gate slammed again and he returned to the window; but no one was coming up the path. It seemed as if that gate, also, was moodily expectant and impatient.

He returned to the fireplace and was about to press the electric bell when his eye was caught by two photographs on



the mantelpiece, photographs of women, probably sisters, mounted in narrow frames of black wood.

One of the two women, plainly the younger, was smiling slightly, but it was the face of the older woman that held Martin's attention. She had dark eyes and heavy dark hair that rolled back from her forehead in waves that held no suggestion of artificial methods. There was more than a hint of sadness in her face, or perhaps of a capacity for suffering, yet there was nothing, Martin thought, of affectation or pose. He looked at the photograph with the eye of an artist, and it pleased him, enthralled him. He thought that this was at once the most beautiful and most intellectual face he had ever seen. He could remember no idealized portrait that had ever made so strong an appeal to him. By some lucky accident the mechanical process had revealed the mind of this woman, he thought; and the very limitations of the reproducing machinery had avoided the possible failures of the living artist. Here was not a personality seen and changed, however subtly, by another human mind, but some glimpse of the very woman herself. An emotion of worship arose in him. He wanted to kneel before this presentation of beauty.

The weary protests of the slamming gate had ceased to penetrate his consciousness, but he was suddenly recalled to the purpose of his visit by the sharp click of a latch, followed by the banging of the front door. Then he heard a clumsy footstep in the hall, and a loud voice shouting roughly for "Hester."

## II

Two minutes later Robin Greg came stumbling into the room. His indeterminate colored hair was ruffled; his collar was crumpled, and the band of his flat tie had worked up at the back.

"How d'ye do, Mr. Bond?" he said with a certain geniality of tone. "Wotterhouse has told me all about you. I'm vairy sorry I'm so late. I've had a devilish lot of things to do. Come into

the study. I don't know what that wumman put you in the drawing room for."

He shook hands and immediately turned and stumbled out of the room, leaving Martin to follow.

The study was a much larger room; three walls of it were lined with bookcases. The fourth wall was nearly filled by a square bay window that looked onto a decently wide strip of garden, enclosed, as in front, by park paling. This garden also looked bleak and uncared-for, but the study had an air of life and human interest. With one exception, an American organ, the furniture was all in keeping; the big table in the center, the swinging chair in front of it, the revolving bookcase, even the two large armchairs that were placed near the fire, all maintained a tone of leisurely work. And the books, row above row, that gave color and setting to the whole, wore a friendly and attractive face. There were no stiff sets of volumes in tooled bindings. These were all books that had been read.

Greg had already thrown himself wearily into a big, deep-seated wicker armchair. "Quite a library, eh?" he said, noticing Martin's interest in the books. "Bought every one of them myself, except a few review books I kept. Sit ye down; Hester'll be bringing us tea in a minute."

"Mr. Waterhouse told me—" began Martin.

"Oh, I know all about what Wotterhouse told you," interrupted Greg. "I had your letter. Sit ye doon now and we'll hae a crack." He smiled as if to give point to his lapse into dialect. In his ordinary conversation, only an occasional variance in pronunciation marked him as a Scotchman.

"You're looking for a secretary, I believe?" said Martin, carefully avoiding further reference to Waterhouse.

"I've been thinking of it. You see, I've got an order from a publisher to write a book on Socialism. To tell you the truth, the manuscript ought to be delivered next week and I've hardly written a word of it!" Greg paused and gave a curious little hooting laugh.



"I'm so devilish full of work in the city," he went on, "that I can't set myself to write in the evening. I have the whole plan of the book in my mind; what I want now is someone who'll take it up and put the thing into English. If you could do the job, you'd have to work with me at night and on Sundays. It'd be better if you could live in the house. I'm a widower, but my sister-in-law is coming in a week or two to look after the place, and you could very well come then. I've a wee bairnie—she'll be in presently for her tea—" He seemed to remember that he had ordered tea some few minutes before, and rang the electric bell impatiently.

"I can do nothing with these wummin," he explained, smiling again at Martin, "bletherin' about the place!" And as his urgent summons still evoked no response, he went at the bell again with a new spirit of temper.

Martin was struck by the change of character in Greg's face during this momentary display of irascibility. In speaking the man showed a frank geniality; he seemed eager to put his affairs plainly before Martin. But when Greg turned to the bell, the humor and friendliness died out of his gray eyes, and his well cut but rather large, loose mouth grew ugly, almost bestial. The change in some way intimidated Martin; he felt uneasy, as if he were witnessing a disgraceful thing.

The summons, however, produced the desired effect. A young woman came in bearing a tea tray.

Martin's mind had been working on the problem of the offer which had been tentatively put before him. He had a small private income amounting to about £120 a year, and the fact that no question of salary had yet been raised did not prejudice him. As to the man with whom he was to work, Martin had come to no decision. In his youthful way he found large consolation in the word "eccentric," and the eulogies of Waterhouse had created a subconscious impression which was now precipitated by these evidences of unconventionality. Again the sight of the books and the prospect of studying so essential a prob-

lem as Socialism had favorably influenced him. He had application and ambition, and was clever enough, even at twenty-three, to realize some of his own deficiencies. These things he had been weighing in his mind, considering them in connection with the probability that he would have leisure and opportunity to pursue his journalism while he lived in the house.

"Well," said Martin at last, "I shouldn't have any objection to living here. I suppose it would only be for a month or two? Really, of course, I want to get a Parliamentary secretaryship."

"Oh, I can get that for you," interrupted Greg. "But you'd have to work with me for a month or two first, you understand. However, I'll write to you about it. You see, I can't have you here till Maggie—that's my sister-in-law—comes."

Martin got to his feet. "Well, you have my address," he said.

Greg looked at him with a strange touch of eagerness.

"You needn't be going yet," he said. "If you'll just excuse me a moment, I have something to attend to—" He was out of the room before he had completed his sentence. He shut the door carefully behind him. Martin heard him cross the hall to a room opposite to that in which he had waited. Then that door, also, was noisily closed.

Martin interested himself in looking round at the books.

In less than five minutes, however, Greg was back again. His manner was changed. He was now full of high spirits and a rather coarse jocularly. He began to talk volubly about the books, reciting the history of their purchase, and more particularly, and at great length, the story of his acquisition of certain early numbers of the *Edinburgh Review*. He punctuated many of his remarks with his strange hooting laugh, that had, in some way, the quality of a sneer.

"I really ought to be going," Martin got in at last. "I've an appointment—"

"Hoo! Let it wait, man," returned Greg. "They'll think all the better of



you for keeping 'em waiting. Come on, sit you down now. We haven't talked out this business of ours. Sit you down."

"Really, I ought—" protested Martin, but he was overborne. The personality of Greg suddenly overpowered him. He felt that in any clash of wills he would have no chance against the steady insistence of this man. Greg was dominating, resistless; he pushed all Martin's polite excuses to one side as if they were of no account whatever.

But when Martin had given way and sat down again in the armchair, Greg made no further reference to the matter of the secretaryship. Instead, he became sentimentally autobiographical. "I'm a widower, man," he said thoughtfully, and looked at Martin for sympathy.

"Yes, you told me. I'm awfully sorry," stammered Martin. "Have you—was it some time ago?"

"A year last September," replied Greg, staring into the fire. "It's not the same house since she went. We came here when we were first married, four years ago. Puir Hettie had not a strong pairsonality, but she was a wunnerfu' sweet wife to me."

An inspiration came to Martin. "Er—was that her photograph I saw on the mantelpiece in the other room?" he asked.

"Aye. I could not bear to hae it in here," returned Greg.

"The younger one?" persisted Martin.

"Aye. The other's Maggie, her sister. Whiles she'll be coming to look after the house."

Martin got to his feet. "I must be going, sir," he said. "And if you can anyway make it convenient to have me here, I shall be glad to come."

"I'll let you know," replied Greg. He roused himself and stood up, putting a hand on Martin's arm. "I'll write and let you know," he repeated. "You see, I cannot have you here till my sister-in-law comes," he explained again, as he followed Martin to the front door.

The air outside seemed cool and fresh after the atmosphere of the study. As he walked out, he heaved a sigh of relief.

The gate in front of him banged mournfully in the wind as he approached it. When he had reached the pavement he turned and, leaning over, carefully pressed down the latch into the hasp.

### III

MARTIN waited for ten days, and then wrote to Greg to ask if he was yet in a position to decide the question of the secretaryship. To this letter he received no reply, and after a week had elapsed he wrote again, saying that he had had another offer made to him and would be glad to hear from Mr. Greg before he definitely accepted it. At the end of three weeks Martin called on Waterhouse at his office.

Waterhouse received him with a cordiality that was almost flattering.

"I came to ask you about Mr. Greg," began Martin.

"You saw him, didn't you?" said Waterhouse encouragingly.

"Yes, I did, and I thought it was practically arranged," said Martin. "But that's three weeks ago, and I've written twice since and had no answer."

"I believe he's been away," returned Waterhouse reassuringly. "He didn't attend the Revival Club committee last Tuesday, and Spiers told me he thought he was away."

"Oh, I see," said Martin, and then went on: "I don't quite know what to do. I've had an offer of a place in the newsroom on the *Daily Post*. It isn't much of a job, but it would be experience for me."

"Yes," replied Waterhouse thoughtfully. He looked down at a manuscript on the desk before him, and ran his thin, delicate fingers through the masses of his exuberant black beard. "Yes, of course, it would be experience. But I don't think that sort of post leads to much. Of course you know," he added, "that if you go on the *Daily Post*, it might make it a little difficult for me to—"

"I see," said Martin. "You really think, then, that there is still a chance of my getting the secretaryship, and that



it might lead to more than the other thing?"

"I could keep in touch with you better," returned Waterhouse. "I am hoping that you will belong to our party, you know. I don't mean to say that we are in any way opposed to the Government programme—quite the contrary; but we represent a section that is, perhaps, rather more radical, in some respects. We hope—" He mumbled something inaudible. His voice was always pitched on a soft, low note that did not carry. If he had not been such a hopeless public speaker he would never have been editor of the *Gallery*.

"I suppose Mr. Greg—" began Martin.

"Without question," replied Waterhouse quickly. "Without question. He would have been put up at the last general election if it hadn't been for his wife's death. I'm afraid that broke him down rather, for a time. I suppose you noticed—"

"I thought he was a little odd," admitted Martin. "A little eccentric, perhaps."

"Yes?" prompted Waterhouse, turning over the leaves of a manuscript. "Odd, you thought?"

"Rather brusque in his manner and—and funny somehow," explained Martin.

"I certainly think it would be a chance for you to go to him," said Waterhouse suddenly. "I dare say I shall be seeing him as soon as he comes back. If I do, I'll ask him what he intends doing."

Waterhouse's good-bye was cordial enough. He even held out a hope that he might find work for Martin on the *Gallery* a little later on.

Martin wrote that night and refused the offer of a sub-editorship on the *Daily Post*. It was a very polite letter, but he carried it about in his pocket for three hours before he posted it. He had a strange disinclination to commit himself to a final decision.

Five days later he received a letter from Greg. It was typewritten on a large sheet which bore the name of Bickersteth, Andrew & Greg, and an ad-

dress in Eastcheap, but no indication as to the nature of the firm's activities.

The note ran:

DEAR MR. BOND:

I have been expecting to hear from you. If convenient to you, I should be glad to start the book on Saturday next.

Yours truly,

ROBIN GREG.

"Well, that's rum," Martin remarked to himself. "I wonder if he never got my letters?" He was afraid that Greg was offended—his letter was certainly curt. There was, however, the possible solution that he had not been home for three weeks and had gone straight back to his office in Eastcheap. If so, he would find the letters awaiting him on his return to Garioch, and the apparent rudeness or indifference of his silence would be explained.

To make everything certain on this occasion, Martin sent a telegram, accepting the appointment, to each of Greg's addresses.

He hoped that some time during the three days that would intervene before Saturday he might receive some acknowledgment of the receipt of his letters, or at least some further confirmation of the agreement—not a word had been said, as yet, as to salary. But as he had heard no more by two o'clock on Saturday, he decided to take everything for granted.

He drove down in a motor cab. He took only one portmanteau with him, and made arrangements for the rest of his luggage to be kept at his boarding house until he returned.

The driver of the taxi had never heard of Demetrius Road, and when he was told the suburb in which it was situated, stipulated for special fare, on the ground that it was outside the radius.

Martin was strung up and nervous. At the last moment he was inclined to send another telegram and cancel the whole affair. Even in the cab he still hesitated.

It had been a dull morning, and at the very moment of starting the rain began, at first in a thin, hazy drizzle but soon developing into a steady downpour. Never in his life before had Martin felt



so nervous and uneasy. The rain depressed him, and still more the sight of the dreary streets through which he was passing. Everything about him seemed full of gloomy foreboding.

More than once he leaned forward to give the driver fresh directions. Some instinct told him to turn back, but each time he argued fiercely with himself, urging himself not to be a fool. He examined the facts and found no excuse for this curious disinclination to go on.

Demetrius Road was found at last, after many gropings and inquiries.

He paid off the cab at the gate, which was latched now, as if no one had passed through it since Martin had so deliberately closed it five weeks before. The curtains still straggled across the bay window, the bell was still out of order, and Hester repeated precisely her earlier formula before opening the door.

As she, at last, flung it back, the key fell out and tinkled on the tiles of the lobby.

"Och, it's you!" said Hester. "Mr. Greg'll no be at home, but he tolt me to expect ye."

At the door of Martin's room, she turned and said abruptly:

"Miss Hamilton'll be coming the evening. Happen Mr. Greg'll be going to meet her."

But even that news did not disperse his gloom. There was something about the air of the place that was physically repugnant to him. He wished that he was not going to meet Miss Hamilton in that house.

#### IV

FROM his window Martin could look out over the front garden and the road. There was no stir of life anywhere. The soft hiss of the rain, the gurgle of a drain-pipe and the patter of water from the leaking eaves gutter were the only sounds that challenged the prim solemnity of Demetrius Road. London might have lain on the other side of the world.

He shivered and turned on the electric light. He found that the time was a quarter past four; the day had died early on that dull afternoon.

He found a bright fire in the study and his tea laid out. The curtains were drawn and the room wore an air of cheerful comfort. By the time he had finished tea and lighted a cigarette, Martin had decided that it wasn't going to be so bad after all. After an examination of the books, he took down Kirkup's "Quintessence of Socialism" and began to read.

The house was wonderfully quiet. Almost perfect silence prevailed. There was not even a clock in the room.

The first interruption to his reading came at a quarter to seven, when Hester came in to clear away the tea things.

"When do you expect Mr. Greg back?" Martin asked.

"He'll be gone to meet Miss Hamilton," said Hester. "They'll not be in till ten, I shouldn't wonder."

At a quarter to eight she returned to tell him that his supper was ready.

When he had finished the meal he went into the drawing room and stood for several minutes gazing at the photograph of Miss Hamilton. Her face appeared less sad than he had imagined, and he found a tenderness in the eyes and mouth that had been no part of the memory he had carried with him during these five weeks. He suffered a faint sense of disappointment at the discovery. As he saw it now, this was the photograph of a living woman; in some inexplicable way he had been cherishing the ideal of something more ethereal, more angelic. That deliberate association of the photograph with his thought of the dead wife had doubtless been a subconscious influence. When he returned to the study, the problem of Socialism no longer held his interest. Shutting his eyes, he leaned back in his chair, and quite distinctly the face of the photograph presented itself to him. In the effort to retain the vision he opened his eyes and it vanished completely. He tried several times to repeat the phenomenon, without success. . . .

He was yawning horribly when he heard the click of a latchkey in the front door.

He stood up at once, nervous and uncomfortable. He thought it quite pos-



sible that Greg might have forgotten all about him. He could not decide whether to go out into the hall or wait in the study. He heard Greg calling loudly for Hester, and the thump of luggage being set down. He waited another minute, and then, as no one came in, he opened the door and went into the hall.

There was no one to be seen. The front door stood wide open, and two rather small trunks had been set down at the foot of the stairs.

Presently the door of the dining room opened and Greg came out.

"Hello!" he said brusquely at sight of Martin.

"Hello!" replied Martin, flushing; and then, to clear the situation, he went on: "I've been here since four. I understood from your letter—"

"Oh, all right—all right, man," said Greg; "that can wait. I'm starved."

He still had on his bowler hat and his coat collar was turned up to his ears. He looked wet, cold and cross.

"I suppose you've got a fire in the study," he continued. "Maggie's dropped something in the cab, like a feckless creature, and gone out to hunt for it."

"The feckless creature has found it, Robin," said a voice from the doorway.

"Och! For heaven's sake come in, Maggie, and shut the door," said Greg. "I'm clemmed."

She obeyed him with a kind of nervous eagerness, and then came forward into the hall.

"Robin," she said, "you haven't introduced me."

"Och!" exclaimed Greg. "What's all the fash about? This is Mr. Bond, and ye're just Maggie, I suppose. Come into the study, woman, and let's get warm."

Martin followed them, feeling utterly ashamed and miserable.

Greg put his hat on the writing table and threw himself into his usual chair. Miss Hamilton sat down opposite him and unwound her damp furs.

Martin took the swinging chair and leaned forward over the writing table, which was between him and the other two. He was utterly disappointed in

Miss Hamilton at that moment. He could trace a certain likeness between her and the woman of the photograph, but the differences were inexpressible.

For quite a couple of minutes there was silence except for the grunting of Greg as he stretched out his boots to the fire; then he turned to Martin and said:

"I found your letters."

"I hoped you would," returned Martin drily. He was quite determined that he would give up this engagement.

"You see, I've been away," said Greg, "and when I got back there was a lot to be done, and I'd no time to be bothering about private correspondence. And I haven't had a minute to write to you again since I got your wire," Greg went on. "But I 'phoned to Macaulay's and got 'em to alter the date of the contract for the delivery of the book. They've given us till the end of March. That's nearly five months. We ought to get it finished by then."

"As a matter of fact," he confided, the book isn't started yet, but I told them it was half finished." He emphasized the remark by his hooting laugh. Martin was plainly left to draw the inference that Macaulay's had been cunningly deceived.

His immediate impulse was to throw up his job and get away. Greg seemed to him coarse and vulgar; his manners and his speech failed all too obviously to attain to that code of "decency" which was the foundation of Martin's standard of behavior. The man was Scotch and a graduate of Edinburgh University, and these were faults which, in Martin's opinion, should have been covered by a more than ordinary attention to the conveniences of decent society. "I don't believe I could stand him for a week," he thought.

"I'm clemmed with the cold," Greg said suddenly. "Perhaps I'd do well to have a drop of hot toddy." He paused, looking inquiringly at Martin—Miss Hamilton had left them alone together. "Will you join me?" he asked.

"I don't think so, thanks," replied Martin.

"You don't think so, eh?" said Greg. "Well, I'll have in two glasses, and you



can make up your mind presently," and he rang for the maid.

"I've got a chill, Hester," he explained, almost apologetically. "Will ye bring in the little kettle, and tumblers and sugar and the whiskey?"

Hester retired without comment, and returned a minute or two later with everything she had been asked to fetch. She put down the tray on the table and set the kettle on the fire without a word, but as she was leaving the room she looked at Greg and said, "Miss Margaret'll be gone to bed, no doubt," and without waiting for a reply went out and shut the door.

Greg lay back in his armchair and stretched out his feet to the fire—he had changed his boots for old carpet slippers. So long and low was the chair that his body from feet to neck was in a straight line. Four fingers of each hand were thrust into flap pockets cut in the front of his trousers. His chin dropped onto his chest; he stared solemnly, thoughtfully, before him.

He did not ask Martin again whether he would take any whiskey, but poured out a generous allowance and filled it up with hot water.

"Here, you can put your own sugar in," he said, and turned his back while he filled the other glass.

Martin did not see whether Greg had filled his own glass or not, but he saw him drink, and when Greg turned round, the glass was half empty.

His own whiskey was so hot that he could not touch it. "Lord, what a throat he must have!" he thought.

"It'll keep out the chill," remarked Greg, subsiding into his chair again. "There's nothing like hot grog for a chill."

He began to talk about the book with enthusiasm. From this topic he slid gradually into a discussion of more general politics. It seemed that he had met every man of note on both sides of the House.

Martin forgot his resentment. In this genial mood Robin Greg was wonderfully entertaining. All that apparent rudeness was probably no more than a certain Scotch roughness of manner. He

could not be much over thirty-two years old; yet he was being eagerly sought after by the party who rallied round Waterhouse and the *Gallery*, the party which, even at Cambridge, Martin had heard spoken of as representing the true spirit of the new Liberal movement. He suddenly appeared as a new figure in the political field, a man who was known and watched by those who pulled the important strings. Martin felt that he had shown his youth and ignorance by passing premature judgment on a man who was so closely in touch with the rulers of the country.

"Och! The kettle's empty," remarked Greg. "I'll just go out and fill it."

"Isn't it getting rather late?" asked Martin.

"Oh, we'll make a night of it now," returned Greg as he left the room.

Martin got to bed at last, a little muddled but full of great ambitions. There was a great work to be done in England. He had learned that night, for the first time, how many of the great figures in the political world had fallen a prey to the vice of drink. Liberalism was rotten with it. But with Robin Greg as Prime Minister and Martin Bond as, say, Home Secretary, England would witness a wonderful purification of the political air. Martin fell asleep in the midst of a vision of a sober and regenerate Parliament, ruled and led by the two great exponents of the new temperance movement.

## V

SOMEONE was knocking at the bedroom door.

"Hello! Yes? What is it?" asked Martin.

He sat up in bed, and the movement made him suck in his breath with a gasp of pain. For a couple of minutes he sat quite still. Then he got up slowly, sat for a moment on the edge of the bed, and finally opened the door and felt outside for the expected hot water.

He found no one in the dining room when he finally got down. He was quite



prepared to wait. He wanted tea, but he had no desire for food. He hoped, fervently, that Miss Hamilton was having her breakfast in bed. He was afraid to meet her; he was utterly ashamed of himself, and angry with Greg.

He was relieved by the entrance of Hester, who brought in a single breakfast and told him that Miss Hamilton had already had hers and that the master of the house had a chill and would not be down before lunch. She added that she had lighted a fire in the study.

The day passed tediously. No one came into the study to disturb him. Now and then he opened the windows for air and once went out for a short walk.

About four o'clock he heard a bump on the floor overhead, followed by the thud of footsteps about the room, and a few minutes later Greg came into the study. He was wearing an old dressing gown and carpet slippers, and he had not shaved nor brushed his hair. He looked unspeakably frowsy and dirty.

"Hello!" he said. "Whur's Maggie?"

"I haven't seen her," replied Martin. He had stood up when Greg entered, and now waited, book in hand, for him to sit down.

Greg grunted, went over to the window and closed the transom lights, then came back to the fire and sank into his armchair.

"I've got a nasty chill," he remarked.

"Yes, so I heard; I'm sorry," said Martin.

Greg stared moodily into the fire, his hands rammed into the pockets of his dressing gown.

"Whur's Biddie?" he asked after a pause.

"I don't know. I haven't seen her, either," replied Martin.

"She has her tea with us on a Sunday," said Greg, "and we sing hymns." He leaned forward and pushed the bell. It was Miss Hamilton who finally answered it.

"Oh, Robin," she said as she came into the room, "are you better? Tea will be coming in a minute."

"Whur's Biddie?" asked Greg, without looking up.

"She'll be down directly," said Miss Hamilton. "Are you better?" she repeated as she sat down.

Martin frowned. Why didn't she stand up to the man? There was plainly nothing the matter with him except that he had drunk too much the night before, and had been too lazy to dress himself. Why didn't she show him what she must think of his slovenliness? It was disgusting that he should appear like that before a woman.

"I caught a nasty chill," said Greg, "doddering about with you in the rain last evening, and I'll have to be in the city by half past ten tomorrow. There's a board meeting at eleven and I'll have to coach Andrew; he's clever enough with his fingers but a perfect fool at speaking. I'll be devilish busy this week, and I thought I'd best take care o' myself today."

"Why don't you go to the meeting yourself instead of sending Mr. Andrew?" asked Miss Hamilton.

"Och! I can't handle the accounts," returned Greg with a chuckle. "If I could there'd be no need for Andrew in the firm."

Martin somehow received the impression that his employer's business affairs were not quite fair and aboveboard. What was wrong with the man and his house?

"I've been thinking it all over, Mr. Greg," Martin said that evening, "and I've come to the conclusion that I shan't be able to take on the work."

"Why's that?" asked Greg. His voice was subdued and a little plaintive.

"Oh, well, there are many reasons," said Martin, conscious that the most cogent could not be explained. "To begin with, it seems to me that it would be rather a waste of time. I mean I've been here twenty-four hours now, and you don't seem to have anything really definite for me to do."

He waited for the other to speak. He had thrown down a definite and rather daring gage, he thought; but as Greg only stared moodily into the fire and made no reply, Martin went on.



"And, for another thing, I'm afraid I'm not the right man for you. I've been reading a certain amount of Socialism since I've been here, and I've realized what a big subject it is. And there are other reasons, too. I think I'd better go tomorrow."

"What are your other reasons?" asked Greg.

Martin frowned. "Oh, a dozen little things," he said evasively.

"Be honest, man!" replied Greg sadly. "It's no use at all to beat about the bush."

Martin looked uncomfortable and said nothing.

"Shall I tell you the truth about it?" asked Greg.

"Well, if it is the truth," replied Martin, leaving himself a loophole.

"Eh, well," said Greg, still staring moodily into the fire, "the fact is that ye don't like the ways of this house. They're not the ways ye've been accustomed to, and ye're too young to make allowances. But there's another thing," he continued, putting up his hand to stop Martin's protests, "and that's maybe more important still. It's just this—that ye don't like *me*." He stopped and looked Martin full in the eyes. "Tell me the truth, now. What is it ye've got against me?"

Martin grew very red. "I don't make friends quickly—" he began.

"Is that all?" interrupted Greg.

"Oh, well, no, it isn't, if you want to know," said Martin bravely. "I don't like your manner to me or to—to Miss Hamilton; and I don't like the way you go about the house without having shaved or brushed your hair. I dare say it's all rotten prejudice on my part, but that's how I feel about it."

He had burned his boats now, he thought. He did not like to meet Greg's glance, but waited, expecting and rather hoping for an outburst. If Greg lost his temper, the way of escape would be easy. It was a relief to have got it over.

There was silence for a few seconds and then, to Martin's amazement, Greg said:

"Ye're quite right. I know it. But ye shouldn't judge me too soon. I've

been sairly put about the last six weeks. I can't just explain to ye the trouble I'm in, in the city, but one of my partners has been making a mess of things, and I've been worried to death trying to get them straightened out. Maggie knows. She'll tell ye all about it if ye want to hear the particulars. On the top of that Macaulay's have been at me about this contract.

"But the worst of all is that my health hasn't been good recently. Now I'm telling ye this in confidence, Bond. Ye may know that I'm an ambitious man. I'm not asking for chances—I can make my own; but I'm not wanting Wotterhouse and his party to know that I'm sick. I want to use Wotterhouse and his paper, the *Gallery*, and they'll not help to have me put up if they think I'm likely to break down in the middle of an election. I'll be well and hearty enough as soon as I have this business affair settled, and I've little doubt that I'll get things straight before the board meeting tomorrow morning. It's just worry and overwork that's been killing me. I was at business till half past eight on Saturday, and when I came home I was just worn out. I don't blame ye for thinking me a nasty beast today, but I tell ye I was too tired to care a damn what ye thought."

He paused and looked again at Martin.

"I say, I'm most awfully sorry," he said.

"Whisht! Don't apologize, man," returned Greg. "I'm glad you spoke about it. I've no opinion of a man who's afraid to speak his mind. But I want ye to reconsider this matter of writing the book. I'll not be able to pay ye a big salary, not more than a pound a week—and ye'll be living in the house, of course. But I'll go halves in the book, and your name shall appear with mine on the title page. The way I see it, it'll be only fair to do it in collaboration."

"Oh, no, that's too generous," said Martin.

"Och! Don't blather," put in Greg kindly. He got up, went over to the writing table and took out a folded paper. "There's Macaulay's agree-



ment," he said, tossing it to Martin. "Ye'll see that the royalty begins at ten per cent and rises to twenty."

He dropped into his chair again and sat quietly while Martin glanced through the agreement.

"But, look here, I couldn't possibly let you go halves," stammered Martin.

"That'll be my affair, I'm thinking," said Greg. "I took a fancy to ye the first time I saw ye—though I gather it wasn't mutual," he added slyly.

"Really it was," said Martin eagerly, "only—"

"Yes, ye've told me that already," returned Greg. "And I've apologized. I like your pluck all the same, for I've a bitter tongue when I'm crossed. Now will ye stay and go on with the book? I'll promise ye I'll be more careful o' my manners and appearance in the future."

"Please don't," pleaded Martin. "I was a silly ass. I didn't understand. Of course I shall be awfully glad to help you if you really think I should be any good. I'm only afraid—"

"I'll look after that," put in Greg drily. "But I never make mistakes about a man. I've the insight. It's a gift I have from my mother; she's Highland."

How utterly wrong he had been about this man, Robin Greg! Hang it, the man was not far short of a hero!

## VI

DURING the next three days Martin settled down into what he supposed was the ordinary routine of the house.

Greg took his breakfast in bed every morning, but it was always understood that he must catch a early train, and from nine o'clock onward a sense of urgency pervaded the household. The house sighed a thin gasp of relief when he was at last got off. During the day Garioch nodded while the women moved about scrubbing, cleaning and polishing, revivifying it for the return of that tense watchfulness which would spring into life at half past five, with the click of a latchkey.

Martin made little progress in his knowledge of Miss Hamilton during those three days. He saw her at meals—alone at breakfast, with Biddie at lunch and with Greg at dinner; and in the evening she came into the study for coffee, smoked one cigarette and talked business or politics with her brother-in-law. But she seemed to be on her guard with Martin. During breakfast she was aloof and preoccupied. And later in the day, even during the placid hours between ten and five, she gave him no confidences about herself nor encouragement to speak of his own life and ambitions.

Martin told himself that she was Scotch and therefore cold and reserved; that she regarded him as a schoolboy; that for some reason she had taken a particular dislike to him; and that he did not care in the very least what she thought of him. The last self-confidence was a source of some comfort, and he dwelt on it frequently, and tried to live up to it by assuming on occasion an icy indifference whenever he spoke to her. He varied this attitude by an appearance of great absorption in the work upon which he was engaged. On Tuesday he pretended not to hear the luncheon bell, and did not come to the table until he was fetched by Hester.

"I beg your pardon—I was rather busy and I didn't hear the bell," was his formal apology on that occasion, and during the meal he was so abstracted from the common affairs of life that Miss Hamilton had to ask him twice whether he would have any more curry. She did not, however, appear to be in any way affected by his detachment; she certainly made no effort to maintain conversation; and when Martin returned, at the earliest possible moment to his work, he told himself that he disliked all Scotchwomen. He also decided for his own satisfaction that she was probably much older than she looked, and frightfully formal.

Immersion in Socialism usually distracted his thoughts from all other affairs, but on Wednesday afternoon the reading of Godwin's "Political Justice" led him to look up a reference he had



noted, to Mary Wollstonecraft. And as he read the details of her life, the appearance and personality of that remarkable woman became extraordinarily real to him. He spent an hour looking up other literature, and it was not until the scanty material at command failed him that he realized that the image he had formed of Miss Wollstonecraft was really that of Miss Hamilton.

The realization startled him; and he put down his book and went to the window to think the matter out. All his foolish little poses and criticisms had suddenly fallen away. The influence of Mary Wollstonecraft's heroism was strong upon him, and the picture, he saw, was of an idealized Margaret Hamilton, lifted from all the incongruities and cares of her present surroundings.

"She isn't free," thought Martin. "She has allowed herself to be bound by the little duties that she imagines she owes to Biddie and Greg. She is trying to fetter her soul by doing what any other woman could do as well, when she ought—" He was a little uncertain what it was she ought to be doing, but it was undoubtedly something glorious, something even greater than Mrs. Godwin had done.

It came to Martin as a great inspiration that this was the true picture of Margaret Hamilton. Surely there was some diabolical influence in this house which blinded him. He had utterly misjudged Greg, and then despite the subsequent revelation of his own mistake he had gone absurdly on to commit this even greater error. He saw, now, the explanation of Miss Hamilton's attitude toward himself. She was moving on a higher plane of being, despite her attention to household duties, and it was unlikely that she would condescend to take any interest in a worthless youth of twenty-three, absorbed in so trivial a subject as Socialism.

He blushed when he remembered his ridiculous assumption of preoccupation at lunch the day before. What a silly, cocksure, blundering ass he had been; how inflated with childish egoism to suppose that she cared at all whether he noticed her or not!

He had been right in the first instance, when he had seen her photograph in the next room; and had not that first inspiration been confirmed when she had sat in this very study on the evening of her arrival? Unquestionably all his subsequent idiocy had been due to the effect of his filthy debauch. Never again, as long as he lived, would he touch whiskey.

He sat down and read once more the article on Mary Wollstonecraft. She had come to life for him. He noticed that there was little bibliographical matter, and determined to write a new life of her when he had finished the Socialism book. He had always meant to write a book of some sort; here was a subject ready to his hand, and one in which he could become absorbed. Moreover, there was the mark of fate in this strange presentation of material, for was it not a miraculously appropriate time for such a book as he proposed? He saw himself as a champion of the woman's movement. . . .

In the middle of his elation he was startled by the sound of the piano in the next room. He had heard the keys being dusted in the placid hours of the morning, but no one had played a note since he had been in the house.

He held his breath and listened. He knew that it must be Miss Hamilton. She was playing so softly that he could hardly hear her and singing, almost under her breath, Schubert's "*Du Bist Mein Ruh'*!" He tiptoed to the study door and opened it with infinite precaution. He could hear more plainly in the hall, but he crept nearer and nearer to the drawing room door.

She sang the song through in the same subdued undertone, and then he heard the lid of the piano gently shut down. He felt that the time had come for expression. He tapped gently at the door.

Miss Hamilton opened it. "Did you want me?" she asked, and he could see even in the falling light of the afternoon, that she was blushing furiously.

"Oh, I'm awfully sorry," said Martin. "I only wanted to say that I hoped you weren't going to stop singing, you know."



It's rather lonely sometimes in the study and I was so glad when you began. I hope you won't think it rude of me, but I had to come out here and listen."

"I was afraid I should disturb you," she said. "I know you're very busy."

He wondered if she were chaffing him, but he could see no sign of a smile on her face. They had moved into the room now and she was standing by the piano, facing the window.

"Busy in a way, of course," said Martin. "I want to get the book started and I've a lot of ground to cover, but—" Unconsciously he had subdued his voice, and his tone fell until he became inaudible. But after he had ceased speaking, he could still hear his words sounding in the room; there was no echo but the sentence hung in the air.

"You see, the room is so empty," said Miss Hamilton with startling pertinence.

"What do you mean?" asked Martin. "Did you know what I was thinking about?"

"I thought so," she said. "Weren't you noticing how one's words go on living in this room?"

He nodded. "But how wonderful that you should know that!" he said.

"It's because this room is never lived in," she explained. "For a year before my sister died she hardly ever came in here, and since then it has been practically shut up. I think rooms become influenced by the people who have lived in them, and give their impressions to other people."

She sat down again and began to sing, "Lochaber, No More."

She had a sweet, true voice that sounded delicately round and full in that little room. Martin thought he had never heard anything more beautiful or more sad. Scotch was no longer a dialect to be parodied and made ridiculous in an English music hall; it was the language of a people—a language plaintive with the eternal sorrow of life, vibrant with the free, wild joy of the open—a language full of the poetry and romance of the North.

Martin hardly realized when the song ended. They both sat quite still in the half-darkness, and the arc lamp across

the roadway threw thin, mysterious rays of pale light on the floor.

Margaret was the first to break the silence. "Have you ever been to Scotland?" she asked.

"Not till this afternoon," said Martin softly.

She made a little sound of appreciation at the compliment. Then she shut the piano gently, and had moved to the door before Martin could get to his feet.

"Shall I turn on the light?" she asked.

"Oh, no," said Martin. "Let us leave the room to its beautiful memories."

In the evening Greg pleaded that he was too tired to discuss the book that night; he said he was afraid he had another of his chills coming on, and urged Martin to join him in a glass of hot toddy.

Martin's refusal was quite final, and Greg suddenly looked at him with an odd, furtive glance of suspicion, but he did not renew the invitation.

After the whiskey had been brought Greg took down a volume of Burns's poems and began to read them aloud. Martin wanted to get to bed early, but Greg would not let him go and kept him up till nearly twelve o'clock.

As Martin crossed the big landing on the first floor into which all the bedrooms opened, Miss Hamilton's door opened and she came out, still fully dressed.

"You're very late," she said. "Hasn't Robin come up yet?"

"No; he's locking up, I think," said Martin.

He noticed that she sighed heavily as she went back to her own room. She had looked disturbed and troubled. He wondered why.

## VII

MARTIN tried to slip unostentatiously into his new place in the scheme, next morning. He awoke to a consciousness of pleasure in life, an eagerness to begin the day. He had a feeling that he was no longer alone in the house, that in future there might always be some won-



derful hour for him in the afternoon as there had been yesterday.

At ten o'clock Greg had not left the house. No sound had come as yet from his room.

Martin frowned and stared out of the window. He was resentful. This was Thursday, and there would be only one more free afternoon until Monday, if Greg stayed in all day. Surely he was neglecting his business, whatever it was. Martin felt that he was being unfairly used. He returned to his book with a strong feeling of resentment. He was making up his mind to go for a short walk to clear his thoughts, when he heard the first sounds of life from upstairs.

Apparently Greg was getting up and wanted hot water immediately but when he came downstairs a quarter of an hour later it was quite evident that he had not shaved. He was worse-tempered even than usual, and muttered and grumbled to himself as he put on his overcoat. He took not the least notice of Martin, who stood at the door of the study waiting to offer him assistance.

The final slam of the door shook the house.

Martin went out into the lobby and replaced the key in the lock. Miss Hamilton had not been present, but as Martin returned to the hall, she came out of the dining room.

"Mr. Greg's gone," said Martin. "I thought he was looking very ill this morning."

Margaret looked at him suspiciously. "What do you mean?" she asked. "What do you think was the matter with him?"

"Oh, I have no idea," he said frankly. "I thought he looked rather seedy, that's all. Perhaps it was because he hadn't shaved."

It was not until half past ten at night that Greg returned. Martin heard him come quietly into the hall and go straight upstairs without pausing to take off his overcoat.

Margaret got up quickly. "You had better go to bed now," she said. "I will get him anything he wants when he comes down."

"But—" began Martin.

"He is sure to be tired," said Margaret. "I would sooner you went, please." Her tone left him in no doubt of the sincerity of her wish, but still he hesitated.

"Are you going to sit up?" he asked.

"No!" said Margaret sharply. Then she looked at him and her face softened. "Oh, you dear funny boy!" she said. "Will you please do what I ask you?"

It was so cold in his room that he shut the window. He had heard Greg go downstairs and his voice and Miss Hamilton's in the hall, but since then there had been silence. Martin could hear nothing of what passed in the study. He sat huddled in a traveling rug, his door slightly ajar, and listened. It was nearly one o'clock.

At last he heard the study door open. He struggled out of his rug and stood up. He distinctly heard Greg's voice saying loudly, "Ye're makkin' a great mistake, Maggie," and then the closing of the study door.

Margaret was coming slowly upstairs.

He waited until she had reached the landing and then went out.

"I say, is anything the matter? Can I be of any use?" he asked. By the light that came through his open door he could see that she was crying.

She shook her head. "No, no, it's all right," she said. "Good night."

She went into her own room and he heard her lock the door.

He did not sleep as heavily as usual that night, and a little after three he woke to a realization of strange noises on the staircase. He jumped out of bed and opened the door. Something or someone was making extraordinary noises between grunting and singing, accompanying the performance by a continual thumping on the floor.

Martin switched on the landing light and saw Greg coming upstairs on his hands and knees.

He looked up when Martin turned on the light. "Whisht, man, dinna mak sic a fuss," he said. "Ye're drunk, man—ye're drunk I tell ye." He crawled up another step and began to sing.

"Here! Come out of that," said



Martin. It was not what he intended to say, but it served as an adjuration. He went down half a dozen steps and tried to lift Greg to his feet.

"Whisht, noo, steady, mon, steady," said Greg with a silly laugh. "Ye'll hae me down, if ye're no carefu'. Ye've no head for the liquor, mon, none at a'. Let me get a hold on you or you'll fa' and hurt yoursel'."

By the exercise of considerable patience, Martin got him into his own room at last.

"Eh, mon, dinna gang," roared Greg as Martin left the room. "Ye're gey entertainin' the nicht."

Margaret had given no sign that she was awake.

### VIII

MARGARET did not come down to breakfast next morning.

"By the way, did I leave the light burning on the landing last night?" Martin asked Hester, when she had told him that he was to have breakfast alone.

"Och! It was you, was it?" said Hester. "I thoct it would be Mr. Greg. It'll not be the first time by many."

He wondered if Greg's attacks were periodic, or whether this was an exceptional outbreak induced by financial and business worries.

He remembered that Cecil Barker, with whom he had been associated during his settlement work, had what he believed to be a wonderful specific for drunkenness, a patent drug—probably something you took when the temptation to drink grew too strong to be resisted. It occurred to him that it might be a good idea to talk with Barker.

The day passed slowly. At lunch Margaret looked pale and tired, and kept her eyes averted from Martin's glance.

"He's speaking at a political meeting tonight," she said at last in a low voice. "He will be going about six, if he's well enough."

Greg came into the study at half past six. He was in evening dress, and still fumbling with his bow.

"Here, can you manage this infernal thing?" he asked. "Maggie's no hand at it."

Martin neatly tied the bow for him.

Greg seemed in good spirits. "I haven't made a note of any sort," he said in a humorously deprecating tone, "and I'll have to learn my peroration in the cab, or use an old one. It's the most important part of a speech, the peroration."

He left the house with a laugh.

Margaret did not come into the study before dinner, and throughout the meal her manner was a little constrained. She said something about writing letters, and her tone suggested that they would not meet again that evening.

"Aren't you coming into the study at all tonight?" he asked desperately.

"I may come later," she said—"when I get my letters done—if it's not too late."

"I want to talk to you about Mr. Greg," said Martin boldly.

"Oh, no," she said, suddenly putting aside all pretenses. "Can't you see how impossible it is? How *can* I talk to *you* about Robin?"

"If you can't trust me, I ought not to stay here," he said.

"What is it you want to know?" she asked. "Haven't you seen enough? You have only to tell Mr. Waterhouse what you've seen already and Robin will be damned."

"Oh, good Lord!" ejaculated Martin. "Oh, surely you don't think—I want to help," he pleaded. "I want to help you and Mr. Greg—oh, I want to help, frightfully. Don't you think I could? A little?"

"Let us go into the study," she said, soothing him.

And it was there, sitting over the fire, that she began her explanation by telling him that she *had* trusted him instinctively, from the first.

"But there is something about this place that possesses one, makes one always suspicious," she said. "And lately I've been suspecting you. I believed you were Mr. Waterhouse's spy."

But Robin's been standing up for you to me. He said last night that he



wouldn't trust Waterhouse but he would trust you anywhere. He said you were clean right through. He likes you," she said, "and Robin's a staunch friend. He never goes back on a man, whatever he does."

Martin's emotions were deeply stirred.

"Oh, and I like him, too, awfully," he said. "I'd do anything in the world I could to help him—and you. I would really."

For a few seconds they sat in silence, and then Margaret said: "Do you think you understand what the trouble really is?"

"I suppose he has outbreaks, sometimes, like last night," hesitated Martin, "and—and won't bother to fight them. I thought—"

She drew a long breath of amazement. "You thought that was all?" she asked.

"Can't you tell me everything?" he said. "I feel so sure that I could help."

## IX

"It began years ago," she told him, "before he came to London. He was so brilliant, so clever. When he was twenty-three he was editing a weekly paper in Aberdeen, and he used to go all over the country speaking at public meetings. His people were so proud of him, and so were we. They lived quite near us and we used to see him often. I was only eighteen then; it was before I went to Germany to study. Elsie, my sister, was a year younger than I.

"I was in Leipzig when they got engaged, and I and everyone were tremendously pleased about it. We none of us had the least suspicion that everything wasn't perfectly all right.

"I was at home for the Sommerferien, when the trouble began to show. They had had suspicions for a month or two; all except Elsie. My mother and his people had never said anything to her and she hadn't the least idea. And there never was any open scandal. It might have gone on for years, perhaps, if he had not got ill, but then, of course, the doctor and his family found out all about it."

"Do you mean that he used to drink then?" asked Martin.

"Terribly, I believe. More or less secretly, you know. It's in his family on his mother's side. He used to drink at the club and in the office, too, but not very much. It was at home, in his own room, that he really did the mischief. Steady drinking, you know, every day, day after day; and he was so clever over it that even his mother hadn't the least idea how bad it was, till he got ill.

"They thought he was going to die. He was in bed for weeks; but when he was getting a little better, he wanted Elsie to know. They had kept it from her all that time. And I had to tell her. But Elsie was splendid. She sent a message to him that he was to make haste and get well so that they could get married at once. She had absolute faith in him.

"And he convinced us. Oh, he was fine, then, fine. He came over to see Elsie as soon as he was able to get about, and he told her that he wouldn't trust himself for two years. She was ready and eager to marry him at once, but he wouldn't, although he was desperately in love with her. It must have been that that helped him so well, that and his having been kept away from any possible temptation for two months. And he has tremendous determination. When he's himself he can do anything with anybody, and with himself, too. Just imagine—he went right away for a whole year, to a little island in the Shetlands where there was no chance of his getting anything to drink. He wrote a book on economics up there.

"When he came back he was sure of himself again, but he wouldn't stay in Aberdeen, and even then he wouldn't marry Elsie until he had made some sort of position for her. He came up to London; he had a little money of his own, and in a year he was able to go back and marry her. He is wonderfully clever in business, you know, as well as at other things, and after he had been working with his firm for nine months they were willing to take him into partnership. His father lent him the money for it; I forget how much it was—three



or four thousand pounds, I think. Robin pays interest on some of it still.

"Well, he and Elsie were married, and they were very happy. They were devoted to each other, and then Biddie came, and Robin was doing splendidly in the city; and he had never touched a drop of alcohol for four years.

"And then he took up politics and worked tremendously hard for the party at one or two by-elections. He was doing splendid work for them and everyone was talking of him as the coming man, and said he was safe for a seat at the next election, but his health broke down. It wasn't very much, nervous exhaustion of some sort, you know; he isn't very strong physically; and he went to a local doctor somewhere who didn't know his family record and advised him amongst other things to take stout.

"Well, it was all over from that time. It began very gradually at first, I believe, so gradually that Elsie herself hardly knew when it was becoming serious again. She tried to fight it; she went on fighting it right to the end; but it was hopeless, hopeless, hopeless. He only laughed at her, and refused to take it seriously, and said she was making a fuss about nothing, just as he did to me last night. Poor darling, she was so glad to die in the end, so terribly, horribly glad. Even the thought of Biddie could not make her wish to live. Poor little Elsie, she—"

Margaret could not go on. Martin got up and turned his back, glad enough of an excuse to hide his own face.

He stood for some time by the window, staring at his own reflection in the uncurtained glass panel of the garden door. He was stirred by great emotions and resolves, willing to sink every personal ambition and motive in his eagerness to save Robin Greg.

Margaret was the first to speak. "So you see how difficult it is," she said.

"But he pulled up, before," urged Martin, turning and coming back to the fire.

She frowned and looked down at her hands. "Do you know why I think he was able to, before?" she asked. "Just

because he was kept in bed for six weeks, because he was too ill to trick them or evade them. That six weeks' rest gave him back control."

"But he isn't drinking regularly now," put in Martin.

She looked up at him and smiled. "He hasn't been really sober since I came," she said. "Oh, I *know*," she went on, seeing the look of doubt in Martin's face. "Do you think I don't know? The different man he is when he's not drinking! You've never seen Robin—he's another man altogether. For the past two years Robin has hardly ever been decently sober."

"Good God!" whispered Martin.

"And only those who know him as well as I do would ever guess when he's drunk. Last night was an exception. In the ordinary way he would pass as sober anywhere. They'll probably never guess at the meeting tonight that he's been drinking steadily ever since he woke at half past ten this morning.

"The thing is," she went on, "do you think you can do anything? I know I can't. I've tried everything I know, and he's always been too strong and too clever for me. And he *hates* me when he's drinking, *hates* me, *hates* me! I may tell you that I have one threat, only one, that I can hold over him. I can threaten to tell his family. Even when he is at his worst, that frightens him a little. Only, what good would it do? They would have him put into a home and Biddie taken away, and they would never forgive him. I believe it would be the end of everything for Robin if I did tell them."

"Has he ever tried a cure?" asked Martin. "There was a parson who used to come to the settlement a lot, an awfully good fellow, who has a cure that he swears by. He's been using it for twenty years, and I've seen lists of cures that have been effected under his supervision, and hardly any of them have relapsed."

"Would Robin have to go into a home, or is it one of those things you can give to people without their knowing?" asked Margaret.

"No, I'm sure you don't have to go



into a home," said Martin; "but I'm not certain about the other thing. I have a sort of memory of hearing Mr. Barker say that the patient must be willing. I could easily find out. I'll go tomorrow morning, if you think it's worth while, and see Mr. Barker himself.

"It would be such a magnificent thing to do," he added, "and I believe we can do it. Oh, I'm sure we can. He must be made to see what a future he has, and how he's spoiling it."

"And if he won't consent to try the cure, I can use my threat as a last resource," put in Margaret.

"We must concentrate every energy on this one attempt," said Martin.

He was thinking that if the attempt failed either Margaret or himself, most probably both, would be compelled to leave Garioch. She would go to Scotland and he would return to Bloomsbury, and they would never meet again. If they failed! He was quite determined that they would not fail.

They were both strung to a high pitch of hope, enthusiasm, exaltation, when they heard a violent knocking at the front door.

"Whatever's that?" asked Margaret. She jumped to her feet, looking suddenly pale and frightened.

"By Jove, do you know what time it is?" said Martin. "It's nearly one o'clock. I expect it's—I expect he's come back."

"Will you go?" asked Margaret. "I didn't know it was so late." She had sunk back into her chair again and shut her eyes.

The attack upon the knocker had been renewed with vigor. Evidently Greg had forgotten his latchkey, and believed that the whole house was in bed. He certainly was making no attempt to spare the susceptibilities of the presumed sleepers.

Martin switched on the lights in hall and lobby before he opened the door.

Greg was leaning against the doorpost, his crush hat on one side, his overcoat thrown wide open. There was blood on his face and on his shirt front, and his right hand was wrapped in a bandage.

"Och! It's you, is it?" he said.

## X

HE was very excited.

"Here, let me come in," he said, "and I'll tell ye all about it. Hoo! We've had a fine meeting, I can tell ye."

He lurched as he entered the hall and put out his right hand to save himself, withdrew it again quickly with an exclamation, and then propped himself against the newel of the staircase.

"Whew! Damn it!" he said. "This hand hurts. And I've lost so much blood, I'm dizzy with it. I think I'd better just get Maggie to come down and bind up my hand again."

"I should think you'd better go to a doctor," said Martin.

"Oof! No, not I. I've no opinion of English doctors," returned Greg. "I got this bandage put on by a chemist before I went into the meeting." He laughed that horrible hooting laugh, and went on: "I was an hour late or more, but of course this explained everything. But when I began to speak, I forgot all about it and my gesticulation opened the wound again. The blood was dripping all over the platform, and when I said that every good Liberal was willing to shed the last drop of his blood for the cause, I can tell ye I had an ovation."

Martin was wondering why Margaret did not come out of the study. He hardly heard the jumbled explanation about the accident to the motor cab that Greg was excitedly pouring out, and he cut across it by saying abruptly: "Where's the nearest doctor?"

"Oof! I'll not be wanting any doctor," returned Greg contemptuously. "I'll just run up and tell Maggie to come down. Here! Maggie!" he shouted suddenly.

Margaret was still sitting limp and relaxed in the armchair by the study fire. She was deliberately resting, reserving herself, snatching a brief rest to brace herself for the new struggle.

When she heard Robin shout her name, she got up quietly and opened the study door.

"Oh, Robin, have you cut your hand?" she asked without emotion.



"Och!" ejaculated Greg with disgust. For a moment the look of suspicion flashed out again.

"Hoo, hoo!" he laughed. "We had a fine meeting, I can tell ye, Maggie. I was an hour late or more, and when I got on to the platform, I told 'em the whole story of my accident in the taxi. That warmed 'em up. And when I said I was willing to shed my last drop o' blood in the Liberal cause, they gave me an ovation, I can tell ye. Ye see, the moment I began to speak I lost myself, and the habit of gesticulation was too strong for me. Hoo—the blood was droppin' all over the platform."

"You must have your hand seen to, Robin," said Margaret as soon as he paused.

"Och! It's all right. I had the bandage put on at a chemist's," said Greg. "I'll just get ye to put me on another before I go to bed."

"No!" cut in Martin sharply. "You must tell me where I can find the nearest doctor, Miss Hamilton, and I'll go and fetch him."

Greg looked at him with a foolish smile. "Ye're vairy set on doctors," he remarked.

"Well, of course," returned Martin. He was quite determined that Margaret should not touch that sodden bandage. "Can't you see how dangerous it is for a cut like that not to be sterilized? You must have it bound up with proper antiseptics. Besides, you may have cut a big vein or something that ought to be tied. If you have it bandaged by an amateur you may bleed to death in the night, and you'll almost certainly get blood poisoning."

"There's Dr. Forman at Oakleigh, a few houses up the road," suggested Margaret.

Greg stood looking down at his hand, nursing it carefully in the bend of his left arm. "Maybe I'd better see a doctor," he said weakly.

Martin had used the one argument which had weight with the unhappy Robin. Even in his sober years, he had had a hypochondriacal tendency; and when he was drinking, the fear of death was a black horror that beset him when-

ever he approached again too nearly the arid, intimidating state of sobriety. The horror was about him now, suddenly clear at his very elbow.

"Maybe I'd better see a doctor," he repeated. "I'll go up myself." He looked at Martin. "Ye might come with me," he added.

This newly substantiated terror had become more powerful than his suspicion of the medical profession. It was the doctor's knowledge, not his ignorance, that Greg feared in his heart.

"Oh, yes, rather; I'll come with you, of course," said Martin, with a sigh of relief. He believed that he had won a moral victory by sheer force of character; he had not guessed the presence of the spectre.

Margaret was leaning against the frame of the study door. She was thankful to Martin for taking this trouble off her hands, but beyond that she was only conscious of feeling utterly weak and tired. She wanted Robin to go, in order that she might get upstairs and lie down. Perhaps by the time he returned, she might feel sufficiently renewed to take up the fight again. She knew her own symptoms so well. Once, last August, she had lain incapable of movement for over two hours, on the study hearth-rug. The nervous energy seemed to drain out of her until the fire of life dwindled down to a thin blue flame, without light or heat, but that yet burned steadily enough, however inefficient to animate her body. She was never afraid that she would die when these attacks overcame her.

Greg solved her trouble in seeking his own private purpose.

"You get away to your bed, Maggie," he said. "Bond'll look after me. I'm wondering why you should have sat up for me," he added with a slight return of his suspicion.

"I wanted to hear about the meeting," said Margaret wearily. "I'm glad it was such a success."

She pulled herself together and walked steadily across the hall, nodding "good night" to the two men as she passed them.



"Can I do anything for you?" asked Martin.

"No, no, I'm a little tired, that's all," she said. "Good night."

Martin watched her anxiously as she climbed slowly upstairs.

"She's a puir, feckless creature," remarked Greg suddenly when Margaret's door had closed. "If it had been Elsie, now—"

"Oh, come on," said Martin, roughly.

"Whisht, man, there's no need to make a fuss," returned Greg. "Put your overcoat on, it's a raw night; I'll be with ye in a minute."

Despite all previous evidence, Martin could have sworn that the man was perfectly sober as he walked quietly across the hall to the dining room and closed the door behind him. Nevertheless, Martin pursed his lips as he put on his overcoat. He understood, now, the object of the visits to that room, and so susceptible was he to the influence of what he took for reality that already the story he had heard that evening was fading from his mind, superseded by the construction he put upon the objective evidence. He had admitted that he was not intuitive, but he had not been stirred as yet to seek a remedy for his failing in that respect.

Martin rang the night bell, the shining brass and black lettering of which was clearly visible in the red rays of the electric lamp which burned in the porch.

"Yes? What is it?" gasped a hoarse voice in his ear.

Martin started and looked round.

"The speaking chube," said Greg, and nudged him with an elbow.

"Oh, yes, of course," said Martin, and made the necessary explanations into the mouthpiece.

A few seconds later a light sprang up behind the fanlight, and automatically the waiting couple looked up and read the bold announcement of "Oakleigh" on the obscure glass.

"He's very prompt," said Martin in an undertone.

"Part of his business," replied Greg. "It's infernally cold," he added, and Martin saw that he was shivering.

After another short pause they heard steps inside the house, followed by the unlocking and unbolting of the front door, and the unknown Dr. Forman was revealed as a tall, powerful-looking man of thirty or so, with a short, thick mustache; a dressing gown that reached his bare ankles was his only visible article of attire.

His first glance was given to the bandaged hand that Greg was somewhat ostentatiously nursing.

"Hello! Come in," he said. "It's Mr. Greg, isn't it?"

Greg's loquacity revived when they entered the neatly arranged surgery that smelt so strongly of drugs. He gave the doctor an account of the accident, of the interview with the chemist and of the consequences of his speech. He repeated all those details which Martin had heard twice already in the hall at Garioch; and laid emphasis on precisely the same points. A sudden doubt arose in Martin's mind as to the truth of that now familiar story. It occurred to him that it had the air of a thing rehearsed. He thought of the peroration that was to have been studied in the cab.

The doctor had turned his back. He was testing the heat of water in a tap that gave over a fixed basin. He nodded occasionally and made a conventional comment now and again, but his manner was hardly that to be expected of a young practitioner eager to propitiate a new patient.

"I think this is warm enough," he broke in finally. "Would you mind coming over here, Mr. Greg? I expect you'd better sit," he added, and placed a chair by the basin.

Greg was not a good patient. He winced and exclaimed as the clogged bandage was slowly unwound from his hand, and when Forman had exposed the wound and began to examine it by turning back the sides of the cut, the exclamations were changed to ill-restrained cries of pain.

"It's a nasty cut," said Dr. Forman, "and there may be some pieces of glass in it. I'll just dress it now and give you a look in in the morning."



"Och! that'll be all right. You needn't trouble," said Greg.

"Very well. Just as you like," returned Forman carelessly.

He dressed the wound and put on a new bandage. He had turned up the sleeves of his own dressing-gown and of Greg's shirt and coat, presenting a startling contrast between the development of his own muscular forearm and the thin wrist of his patient.

Martin liked the look of Forman, and remembered that there was a Guy's man of that name who had been expected to get his International cap.

"I suppose you're not the B. N. Forman who used to play forward for Richmond, by any chance?" Martin asked, when the bandage was finished.

The young doctor's face brightened. "Yes, that's me," he said. "Had to chuck it when I took on this practice. You keen on footer?"

"Oh, yes, rather," said Martin. "I was in the Emmanuel scrum. Not fast enough for the 'varsity, you know, and they were a very hot lot my last year."

"See you again perhaps?" said Forman as Martin and Greg were going.

"Good," returned Martin. "I should like to."

That brief conversation seemed to give him a new hold on reality. Greg slid down another place; he was outside, and therefore beneath, the class of those who could thus recognize each other in any condition or surroundings. Forman had obviously not taken a fancy to him, and Forman was, equally plainly, "a good sort."

As they walked back to Garioch, Greg was repeating for the fourth time the story of his speech.

At the door, Martin had to find Greg's latchkey, which was in his right hand trousers pocket, before they could get in.

"Can I help you to undress?" asked Martin, when he had locked the front door.

"No, I'll manage well enough," returned Greg.

Margaret did not come out of her room.

Toward morning Martin thought he heard strange shouting cries somewhere in the house, but while he was making up his mind to sit up and listen, he fell asleep again.

## XI

MARTIN, breakfasting alone next morning, had time for a cooler consideration of the events of the previous night. He remembered his determination to effect the cure of Greg.

He took up that resolve with a new eagerness as he sat alone over his solitary meal. The business of it all wore an aspect recognizably romantic, even heroic. He saw himself as the instrument of victory, and anticipated the approval of Margaret. She was audience, and he wanted no other. In all his thought of the cure he was determined to bring about, it was Margaret who filled the picture. Robin Greg, shrunken to a puppet, appeared as a simple means of glory, a conveniently difficult problem to be solved.

Margaret came to him in the study at ten o'clock.

"I have seen Robin," she said. "He'll be going up to town by the eleven o'clock train. He says his hand is better. I think this afternoon would be a good time to talk to him about taking the cure you spoke of last night."

"Will he be home?" asked Martin.

She nodded. "He's only going up to get whiskey," she said. "He will be home soon after four. Meanwhile, oughtn't you go and get the cure, so as to have it ready in case you can persuade him to take it?" she asked.

"Oh, yes. I suppose I ought," replied Martin. He resented this necessity of leaving the house during those few precious hours when Greg would be in town. "It won't take me very long," he went on, making mental calculations; "if I went now, I should be back by lunch time."

She did not respond to his assumption of the confidence established between them by their partnership. "I don't suppose Robin will be back before four



o'clock," she said. "You have plenty of time. I must go now."

"Are you feeling all right again this morning?" asked Martin as he opened the door for her. "I thought you looked frightfully fagged last night."

"Oh, yes, I'm perfectly well this morning, thank you," returned Margaret. She looked distraught. She appeared to be quite unconscious of Martin save as a factor in their scheme. Moreover, she no longer leaned upon him. She had given him his directions for the morning. Her whole will and mind seemed given to that man upstairs, the possessed creature who was cravenly ravening for the poison that was the cause of his present agony.

Martin sighed. "I think I'd better go at once," he said, as Margaret went out.

He wanted to be about his task without a moment's delay. He would have liked forcibly to administer the cure to Greg there and then; to browbeat him, threaten and dominate him. The man was a physical coward. Martin remembered the fact as a magnificent resource.

The feeling of urgency remained with him as he made his way by train and tram to the house of the Hon. and Rev. Cecil Barker—that dull house outwardly undistinguishable from any other in the long, faded road which exhibited so little claim to its title of Acacia Avenue—but his urgency was no longer attributable to the desire to enforce a command upon Greg.

Martin had forgotten the number of the house he was seeking, but a trial venture at quite the wrong end of the avenue immediately furnished the necessary information.

The child of fourteen in a sackcloth apron who answered the door to him stared in wonder at his ignorance.

"Ow, now! 'E lives at sixty-three," she said; and "sixty-three" as she pronounced it seemed to possess some peculiar claim to distinction; it was less a number than a description.

Martin thanked her and hurried down the interminable road.

His impatience was heightened by the information that Mr. Barker was out,

and the manservant who came to the door in his shirt sleeves seemed singularly unimpressed by Martin's importunity.

Couldn't say when 'e'd be in, couldn't say where he'd gone, were all the answers he could evoke, and they were given in an uninterested voice which spoke of long familiarity with this type of foolishly urgent visitor.

"But I simply must see him," said Martin despairingly. "It's—it's really frightfully important." He had almost come to believe that there was a life in danger instead of the fear of losing a couple of quiet hours with Margaret. "Can I come in and wait?" he asked, after speculating inwardly on his chances of finding Mr. Barker abroad in his parish.

The little, gray-haired man, who looked less like a servant than an orthodox resident in Sunday morning deshabille, regarded Martin with a suspicious stare.

"You can if you like," he said. "I can't say when 'Is Reverence'll be back. Sometimes 'e's out all day."

"I'll wait for an hour, anyway," said Martin. He was full of resentment against the Vicar. A man in his position ought to leave instructions as to his whereabouts, and he ought to employ a decent, civil servant.

For the next half-hour Martin stood at the dining room window watching the street. The debate that filled his mind turned on the question of how long he ought to wait. Should he give the Vicar an hour, or two or three? Ought he not to resign any hope of seeing Margaret alone that day? But at that point his defence assumed an appearance of weight. He argued that it was absolutely necessary to confer with Margaret before he attacked Greg. He must have his final instructions; there must be some sort of understanding as to plan.

He looked at his watch and found that the time was a quarter past twelve.

"Oh, Lord!" muttered Martin, and threw himself into a shabby leather-covered armchair.

The Vicar came in a little before one



o'clock. Martin heard him in the passage outside, heard him call "Willis" to the servant in the basement, and then after a short interval heard him go upstairs.

Martin could restrain his impatience no longer; he rang the bell viciously.

"I say," he said curtly, when Willis came in hurriedly to see what the fuss was about, "did you tell Mr. Barker that I wanted to see him?"

"E'll see you in a minute or two," said Willis, and went out again before Martin could vent his indignation.

And that futile sense of urgency still harried him when he was sent for at last to the study on the first floor.

He made a hurried apology and began to blurt out his want, the instant necessity for a "treatment" of the "Antol" cure for inebriety.

"It's a very important case," he concluded, having avoided almost by a miracle the introduction of Greg's name.

Cecil Barker smiled and twisted up one corner of his mouth, with an expression that was half-critical, half-whimsical.

"Every case is important, my dear Bond," he said.

"Yes, I suppose it is," said Martin, more humbly.

"Tell me more about this dear fellow you're going to help," said Barker.

"Well, I won't tell you who he is, if you don't mind," said Martin. "In fact, you see, I can't even say yet whether he will consent to take the cure or not."

"Ah!" was all Barker's comment on this reserve, but it perfectly expressed his disapproval.

"If it were only to do with myself," urged Martin, "it would be different."

"And out of your inexperience you believe that you are strong enough to deal with the case alone?" asked Barker.

"I mean to do my best, sir," said Martin. That consciousness of the need for haste was fading. He was coming under the influence of a personality that had swayed stronger natures than his. Cecil Barker had one supreme gift, the power to beget love and respect for himself.

"Ah!" said Barker again, and then, after an effective pause, he went on: "Very fine, all that, of course; very heroic and splendid, turning your face to the stars and calling on high heaven, but—" He concluded his sentence by turning to Martin and smiling—a sweet, faintly whimsical smile, that had some quality of saintly experience and wisdom.

Martin flushed and dropped his eyes. The bolt had been well aimed. "Do you mean—" he began and stopped.

Barker drew his chair a little nearer to Martin's, bent forward and laid a hand on his arm.

"Do you love this man, my dear Bond?" he asked.

That question, spoken with a quiet earnestness that seemed to reveal astounding depths of sincerity, was suddenly presented as a vision of ultimate truth, the final key to all philosophy and ethics. Martin was dazed by his sight of so conclusive and simple a belief. A week earlier, he might have evaded the question, might have sneered later at Barker's profession of altruism; but, in his own way, he had learned, now, what love meant. He knew that it was immense and powerful, and that while a man was upheld by it there was nothing he might not dare. And at the question he made new application of his almost unrecognized knowledge; he saw with a new perception all that he might do for Robin Greg—if he loved him. And yet that woman, Greg's wife, had failed.

"How can one learn to love a man?" Martin asked evasively.

"By giving," replied Cecil Barker, "and by living the life. Come down and have lunch with me, my dear fellow."

Martin thought of Margaret. "I should like to immensely," he said, "but I must get back. My friend went up to the City this morning, and I want to talk it all over with his sister-in-law—she's living in the house—before he comes home."

"You won't confide in me?" asked Barker.

"I can't—yet," replied Martin. "He doesn't know, you see; and I don't even know whether he'll consent to take the



cure at all. And besides, he's a secret drinker, and absolutely denies taking too much, and he's frightfully sensitive about it, of course."

"How long have you known him?" asked Barker.

"Only a week, really," said Martin, after a short hesitation.

"And who gave you the history of the case?"

"His sister-in-law—last night."

"H'm!" was Barker's only comment.

Martin was conscious of feeling that he had been tried in the balance and found wanting. He wondered wherein his fault lay. Surely he could not be blamed for keeping back the name of Greg.

The Vicar had turned back to his writing table, and when he faced Martin again his manner had changed. He was precise and practical. "As your friend is not a poor man," he began, "he will have to pay the full price for the cure, five guineas, and your name must be entered as that of the purchaser. You understand that the cure must be taken with the full consent and coöperation of the patient."

"That is absolutely necessary?" asked Martin.

"Absolutely. The directions as to the manner of administration you will find in the lid of the box. They are perfectly simple. There are twenty-one small bottles, numbered in order, one for each day; and the essential drug is graduated, reaching its maximum strength on the eleventh day. Of course it is absolutely necessary for the success of the cure that the patient should not touch alcohol in any shape or form during these three weeks."

"Wouldn't it be dangerous to take him off whiskey too suddenly?" asked Martin.

Barker shook his head. "Not with this treatment," he said. "The drug takes its place. There will be no return of the craving after the first twenty-four hours. Have you got the money with you?"

"Five guineas? No, I'm afraid I haven't," said Martin. "I've got a couple of pounds or so, I think. May

I leave that and send you a check for the rest when I get home?"

The Vicar nodded, and going over to a cupboard produced a neat, square unlabeled parcel, which he handed to Martin. "Will you sign your name to this form?" he said, pointing to the writing table. "The receipt will be sent on to you tomorrow."

But as Martin was about to take his leave, the Vicar's manner changed once more.

"Just kneel down for a moment, my dear Bond," he said, "and we'll ask for success in the case of your friend."

But if it was the cure of Robin Greg that Cecil Barker desired, he approached the request circuitously, for it was the means rather than the end that figured in his prayer. He suggested, as it were, and that without any of the adulatory forms common in petitions of this kind, that his friend Martin Bond should realize the wonderful potentialities of unselfish love for the man he wished to save. And there were one or two phrases which seemed to imply either that Martin lacked the courage of his convictions, or that he was unnecessarily secretive. "Give him strength to speak openly and without fear," was one of these, and Martin felt that he had, perhaps, been foolish and wrongheaded in not trusting the Vicar more implicitly.

But he was, apparently, forgiven at the last, for in the passage downstairs Cecil Barker laid an affectionate hand on Martin's shoulder and said:

"You've got a splendid work before you, Bond. Call upon me whenever you want me. I'm entirely at the service of your friend at any time of the day or night."

Martin left the house feeling that he had had a great experience, something which marked a period in his life. He was full of an overwhelming admiration for the man he had just left, as for some wonderful modern saint, moving unostentatiously among the swarming lives of London, and leaving everywhere the mark of his influence behind him.

At the station he bought a morning paper and found a report of last night's meeting. Considerable space was given



to Lord Coleman's speech, and there was a note to the effect that Mr. Robin Greg was also to have spoken, but had unfortunately been prevented by an accident. . . .

Martin got back to Garioch at half past three and found Margaret waiting for him in the study.

She smiled when he came in and rallied him gently on the length of his absence, but she looked nervous and ill at ease.

"Has he gone?" was Martin's first question, and he subdued his voice to that conspiratorial note which was becoming the mark of that one topic.

"Yes; he didn't go till half past twelve," said Margaret. "He said he would be back by five, but I don't suppose—"

"We ought to begin this evening," said Martin; then he told her of his conversation with Cecil Barker.

"He said one thing which seemed to me tremendously true," said Martin. "He said that I—at least he implied that one wouldn't have much influence over a man—" He paused again. He found the statement embarrassingly difficult to speak about. "He asked me if I was very fond of Mr. Greg," he said at last.

"And you're not, are you?" asked Margaret, understanding more than had been spoken.

Martin frowned. "Sometimes—last night, for instance—I do, really—quite a lot, I mean; and then—"

"Oh, I know," broke in Margaret. "But don't you understand that it is the real Robin you like? Everyone does. It's only the man you see when he's drinking that's so repulsive to you. And you've hardly seen the real Robin at all. That's what is so awful about it, to know that he's there and that you can't reach him, that he can't reach himself."

"By Jove, yes," murmured Martin. "I see."

"Do you believe in this cure?" asked Margaret after a pause. "Do you think you'll be able to persuade him to take it?"

"Oh, yes, rather," replied Martin quickly. "I know it's a thundering good thing, and I'm absolutely certain I'll persuade him to try it anyway. And that's really all that's necessary. Mr. Barker says the craving for drink goes after the first twenty-four hours."

"You realize, don't you, that you can't trust him when he's drinking?" she asked.

"I suppose you can't," returned Martin, and remembered the report of the meeting.

"He may promise to take the stuff," she said, "and simply deceive you all the time. Don't forget how clever he is."

Martin frowned reflectively. "I see," he said. "How are we going to get over that?"

"You'll have to be with him all the time," Margaret advised him, "for the first day or two, at least." She knew how necessary was that stipulation, and wondered how far it would shake his confidence.

"I can do that all right," he said, without a tremor.

"You must make it a condition," she warned him.

When Greg got home that evening he went straight upstairs without taking off his overcoat.

"He has gone up to hide the whiskey he bought in the city," whispered Margaret. "He brings home the bottles in the inside pockets of his overcoat. He will be down again in a minute."

She packed the tea tray and put away the little folding table, and then, with the tray in her hands, paused and looked at Martin.

"B-be brave when you talk to him," she said; then went out and left him.

## XII

DURING the ten minutes or so that elapsed between the going of Margaret and the coming of Greg, Martin was in no way occupied by thoughts of the unpleasant duty that lay before him. He was thinking only of the movement of Margaret's lips. She had stammered



as a child, and that little trick of hers was a reminiscence of the method by which she had been cured; but to Martin it was an enchantment. She was coming to life for him. He was beginning to see her as a woman. And he believed that never before had she appeared so holy, remote and unapproachable as now.

The appearance of Greg was a brutal interruption.

He was in a sour, fretful mood. He found his own particular chair occupied, and scowled, although it was surrendered immediately he entered the room. Before sitting down, he went over to the window and noisily closed the transom lights.

If Martin had been seeking excuses, he might most plausibly have urged that this was not the moment to open the attack. But, full of ambition to serve Margaret and eager to prove his own ability, he hardly paused to consider the value of diplomatic opportunity. He looked at the figure of Greg stretched out in his usual moody attitude—flushed slightly, and then plunged.

"How's your hand?" he asked.

"Inflamed," replied Greg curtly.

"You ought to have it attended to," said Martin; "it's very dangerous to get a wound like that in your condition."

Greg's eyes narrowed slightly at that description of him, but he did not look up.

"I'll maybe see Forman again tomorrow," he said.

"I want to talk to you about all that, Mr. Greg, if you don't mind," Martin said solemnly.

"All what?" asked Greg, looking up quickly. His eyes were suddenly alert and vicious.

"I want to help you if I can," said Martin, and stared resolutely back at his companion.

It was Greg who first flinched. "I have no idea what you're blathering about," he said.

"Please don't think it's cheek, Mr. Greg," went on Martin, "but I want you to let me help you as a friend, if you will."

"Are ye hinting that I've not paid your salary yet?" asked Greg with a

sneer. He drew out a flat leather purse from one of his trousers pockets, opened it with some difficulty and tossed over a sovereign. "I'd forgotten it was Saturday night," he remarked, and lay back in his chair with an evil smile on his face.

For a moment the issue was in the balance. Martin had jumped to his feet, his face flaming. His eyes were on the door, the chief thought in his mind that he must walk straight out of the room. It was no longer a trivial task he had before him, something to be lightly undertaken and conquered with a debonair smile, but an enormous labor that needed dogged persistence, that would call up his every reserve of strength and self-control, something gigantic that must be overcome because it stood between him and Margaret.

He was still standing when he spoke again.

"Why do you want to kill yourself?" he asked.

"Ye're daft," replied Greg contemptuously.

"It's certain that you can't live long at this rate." Martin looked down at the hearthrug, and saw the sovereign lying where it had fallen. Mechanically he made a movement as if to pick it up, but changed his mind and clasped his hands behind his back.

"If ye're practising your platform manner," said Greg, "ye can wait till ye're alone, or try it on Maggie. She'll have more patience with ye than I will."

Martin stiffened. He lifted his head slightly and looked straight down into Greg's eyes.

"It must be perfectly obvious to you, Mr. Greg," he said slowly and deliberately, "that I have no purpose of my own to serve in this. And I'm not going to pretend for a moment that I'm doing it for any ethical motive. But I've just got to have a try to help you fight this—this craving of yours."

"Eh, ye're daft," repeated Greg. He had met Martin's eyes with a defensive stare for a few seconds, but now he was looking down gloomily into the fire. "Ye're daft," he said again, but his tone had lost its sting.



"I want you to try a cure I've got," continued Martin firmly. "I know that it's—"

"What in God's name are ye hawering about?" interrupted Greg. "A cure for what, man?"

"For your particular trouble," was Martin's euphemism, which gave the other that chance of evasion he was seeking.

He gave his hooting laugh. "If it'll cure Andrew of making muddles," he said, "it'll be worth a fortune."

"You know perfectly well what I mean," persisted Martin.

"Ye overrate my perspicuity," returned Greg. "No doubt ye seem clear enough to yerself, but to me ye seem to be talking nonsense."

Martin realized that he was losing ground. He was no match for the man in this give and take; his only hope lay in sheer determined strength. He flushed a little and then said firmly:

"I know all the facts, Mr. Greg. I know you're drinking yourself to death. I know it's a vice that has got so strong a hold of you that you're no longer able to fight it by yourself."

Greg made a movement to interrupt him, but Martin raised his voice slightly and went on: "And I mean you to try this drink cure. In this particular matter I'm bound to treat you as if you were not responsible—"

"Hadn't ye better open the front door and call the particulars of my 'vice' up the road?" broke in Greg. "Ye seem very eager for the whole house to hear ye."

"The whole house knows," returned Martin.

Greg blenched, but he was not beaten yet.

"I suppose ye and Maggie have been laying your heads together," he said with a sneer. "She's daft on that subject. If I take a glass of toddy for a chill, she'll go blathering to everyone that I'm drinking. Och! I have no patience with the fool, nor with you for believing her."

Martin laughed. "Don't be silly, Mr. Greg," he said. "I've been in the house a week, an you haven't once

been decently sober." And disregarding the hoot which greeted this statement, he went on: "Besides, it isn't usually your habit, I suppose, to crawl upstairs."

"Och! Just once in a way," muttered Greg. "I've been sairly put about the last month."

"And then there are all the lies you have told me. About the meeting last night, for instance. I saw a report of it in the *Daily Post* today, and found that you were never there at all!"

"Have ye told Maggie that?" asked Greg unexpectedly.

"No, I haven't," said Martin, relieved now that he had not referred to it. He felt, suddenly, that he would have stood a better chance in the struggle if he had been fighting single-handed. That sense of having entered into a conspiracy made him feel dishonest.

"Did ye bring the paper home?" asked Greg.

"No; I left it in the train," said Martin.

"I'm glad ye've some sense of decency," remarked Greg.

Martin pondered that for an instant, but returned to the main question. "Will you try this cure, Mr. Greg?" he asked.

"I don't need it," returned Greg. "I tell ye, ye've got a maggot in your head. Ye're suffering under a delusion. Maybe I did take a little too much whiskey that night, but ye needn't be afraid your modesty'll be shocked again. I'll swear off for a month and turn teetotaler, if that'll please ye. Ye're a good fellow, Bond, and I'm not ungrateful to ye for bothering your head about me; and perhaps it's not altogether to be wondered at that ye should have drawn a false inference from the facts. However, I'll promise ye to give it up. Ye'll take my word, I suppose, as one man to another?"

Martin was almost convinced. There was an air of such real sincerity about this speech. He could only refuse the offer made to him by a direct insult. And if Greg had stopped there he must have won this bout, at least. But that



alien personality within him, using his clever brain for its own purposes, overreached itself in trying to gain further immunity from attack.

"But ye must not be too ready to believe everything Maggie tells ye," went on Greg. "She's just not sane on this particular subject. Her father drank, though she'll deny it herself, and she can never forget it. It's just an obsession with her." He looked up at Martin and saw the doubt on his face.

"I wish to God ye'd sit down," he said sharply.

Martin obeyed him.

"Look here, Mr. Greg," he said, "in any ordinary matter, anything outside of this"—he paused, groping for a word, and snatched at the one Greg had just used—"outside of this obsession of yours, I would take your word against anyone; I would, really. But in this particular thing I know that it's part of the disease that you shouldn't tell the truth—"

"Ye're calling me a liar, are ye?" Greg interrupted.

"Yes," replied Martin firmly. "In everything that relates to your drinking, you *are* a liar." He was winning now. He knew it himself. He was conscious of an accession of strength and power.

"You *are* a liar," he repeated brutally. "You deliberately try to deceive me and everyone, yourself included. You aren't to be trusted—"

"Och! What the hell is it ye want?" broke in Greg.

"I want you to put yourself in my hands," said Martin. "I want you to consent to take this cure. It's here in the house. I got it this morning."

"Where from?" put in Greg quickly.

"From a parson I know in Camden Town. He—"

"Did you tell him who it was for?"

"No, certainly not." Martin thanked God that his instinct had guided him aright in that matter also. "I didn't give him the least hint. I bought the stuff in my own name. The question is, will you consent to try it, or do you prefer to drink yourself to death?"

Greg sat huddled up in his chair, nursing his bandaged hand and staring moodily into the fire. "Och! I'll think about it," he said.

"That won't do," returned Martin. He felt that he had his adversary down now. "You *must* take it. Do you *want to die?*" he said.

"Ye're making a great fuss about nothing whatever," said Greg feebly, and then, as though he were conscious of his weakness, he began to ask questions about the cure. But Martin had the upper hand. He replied to essentials, but he was not to be bullied.

"Eh, well, I'll take it," said Greg at last. "Where is the stuff?"

"You understand that I shall have to give it to you, and that I shall stay with you all the time you're taking it," said Martin.

"Och! Ye'll do nothing of the sort," said Greg.

"I must be with you for the first forty-eight hours, at least," said Martin.

Greg rose suddenly to his feet. "I've told ye I'd take the stuff!" he began.

"It is part of the cure that you shouldn't touch a drop of alcohol while you're taking the drug," said Martin, rising also.

"I'll not have ye in the room," said Greg.

"You must."

"I've given ye my word."

"I can't trust you in this. You can't trust yourself."

Greg mumbled something and walked over to the window. For a minute or two he stood there in silence, looking out into the darkness. Then he turned and made for the door.

"I shall come up after dinner," said Martin. "And sit up with you tonight. We will begin the drug tomorrow morning."

Greg walked out without replying, and Martin heard him go upstairs.

"You've done splendidly," Margaret said, when he told her what had happened. "The rest is for me to do." He will lock the door, and won't let you in; but he will *have* to let *me* in."

She went out of the room quickly and ran upstairs.



"It's all right," she said when, after a long time, she came down. He saw that she was trembling violently. He followed her into the drawing room and sat down by her on the settee.

"It's all right," she repeated. "I threatened him, and he's promised. You're to sit up with him. And he wants to see Dr. Forman. Will you fetch him?"

She had laid her hand, limp and trembling, on the padded seat of the settee; and Martin laid his own hand on hers, holding it firmly to give her strength.

"I shall be all right directly," she said, and smiled, but she made no effort to release herself.

"The cut's nothing to worry about," said Forman as he was leaving. "I couldn't find any glass and I've put a couple of stitches in. But he's on the verge of delirium tremens. It's no use mincing matters. I suppose you've realized it."

Margaret winced and looked at Martin, who replied: "By Jove, no, is he really? I didn't know it was as bad as that."

"He must have been soaking pretty steadily for a long time," said Forman, "and the inflammation from a wound like that brings things to a head. Someone ought to sit up with him."

"Yes, I'm going to," said Martin. "I was going to, in any case."

"You'll very likely have trouble with him," the young doctor warned him. "He'll probably try to throw himself out of the window or something."

"Oh, that's all right," said Martin. "I'm pretty strong."

"And he's as weak as a cat," added Forman. "Well, send for me if you want me."

### XIII

GREG was lying on his side with his back to the door, and he did not move or make any sign when Martin came in, quietly locked the door on the inside and put the key in his pocket. He found a comfortable armchair, which he moved to the hearthrug, and sat down to read. For half an hour all was quiet.

Then Greg, partly raising his head from the bedclothes, said:

"What were ye and the doctor haverin' about in the study?"

"Oh, football," said Martin with a laugh. "Are you comfortable?"

"I'll do," replied Greg.

Martin read on for over two hours before a sound from the bed attracted his attention. He looked round and saw that Greg had changed his position. For a few seconds he watched him, and then, as Greg made no further movement, returned to his book. But within ten minutes an incoherent mumbling drew his attention again.

Martin got up and looked at Greg, but the latter did not open his eyes nor give any indication that he was aware of another presence in the room. Martin stood and watched him for nearly half an hour before he returned to his chair.

About three o'clock Greg sat up suddenly with a shout and stared at Martin.

"What are ye doing there?" he asked.

"Reading," said Martin quietly. "Do you want anything?"

Greg's eyes were bright and he looked about him as if he were uncertain of his surroundings; his hair was tousled and stuck out from his head in curious tufts that sprang out at all angles.

"What for are ye reading in my room?" he asked.

"I'm sitting up with you," said Martin. "Hadn't you better lie down again, and try to go to sleep?" He got up from his chair and stood with his hands on the rail at the foot of the bed. He imagined that his patient might become violent at any moment.

Greg, however, seemed to be reflecting deeply. The wildness was dying out of his eyes.

"Eh! Well," he said deliberately, after a long pause, "I'll not have ye in here."

"Oh, yes you will," returned Martin with equal composure.

Greg did not answer him in words, but he threw back the sheet and blankets and swung himself into a sitting position on the side of the bed.

"What are you going to do?" asked



Martin, getting between Greg and the open spaces of the room.

"I'm going to turn ye out," replied Greg. He got to his feet and tried to open the door. He fumbled with the handle for a moment.

"Who locked this door?" he asked aggressively.

"I did," said Martin.

"Where's the key?"

"In my pocket."

Greg stretched out his hand authoritatively. "Give it to me," he said. He appeared perfectly sober and reasonable.

"Oh, don't be a silly ass," returned Martin uneasily. "Get back to bed."

"Give me that key," insisted Greg, raising his voice.

Martin shook his head and tried to look bored. "Go back to bed," he countered.

He saw very clearly that this duel was immensely critical. He had physical strength on his side; the key could not be taken from him by force.

"Here, let me come to the fire; I'm cold," said Greg.

"Better get back to bed," Martin replied.

"Is this your house or mine?" asked Greg with a sneer. "Do ye think ye can come in here and keep me from my own fireside? Get out of my way and let me come to the fire; we'll talk this matter out. I've allowed ye certain privileges and I'm ready to admit that till now ye've behaved decently enough, but let's have no more of this bullying and foolishness—I'll not have it."

"I've given ye permission," Greg continued, "to give me this cure and to watch me while I take it, but I've not given ye permission to treat me as a criminal or a lunatic. And if ye persist I'll have no more to do with the affair—ye can empty your damned cure down the sink."

"Oh, of course you can go and sit by the fire if you like," said Martin. He stood aside and allowed Greg to pass.

"I'm glad ye've still a little discretion," remarked Greg after a short silence. He leaned forward, nursing his wounded hand.

"It isn't that," said Martin. "You know what we said in the study this evening—and you agreed then—in this particular thing you can't trust yourself—"

"I know well enough what ye said, and what I said," Greg broke in quickly, raising his voice. "But is it any way probable that I'll submit to letting ye order me here and there? I tell ye, if ye go that way about the affair, I'll have no hand in it. Ye'll not make me take any silly cure that way. Ye must trust me—within limits. I'm not the sort of man that can endure to be ordered. I just cannot endure it."

"Now then, Bond," he went on with a touch of irritation, "give me that key." He got to his feet and held out his hand. "I'll give ye my word I'll not be drinking anything."

"He's up to every trick when he's like this," Margaret had said. Martin set his teeth and deliberately put all arguments from his mind. "No, I won't give you the key, Mr. Greg," he said.

"By God, ye shall!" Greg returned. His eyes had grown brighter again, his face was flushed, he was losing control of himself.

"I will not," Martin repeated.

"I'll smash the door down," Greg threatened, and backed away as if he were meditating a rush.

Martin stood firm, leaning forward, braced and ready for any attack. Not until Greg suddenly turned and snatched a razor from the dressing table did Martin realize that the whole movement had been a trick.

"Noo, then, ma bairnie," said Greg triumphantly, "will ye gie me that key?" He waved the razor in his bandaged right hand and took a little dancing step into the room. He was grinning horribly. He looked—as he was for the moment—a madman.

"Ye'd no care to be found wi' yer crag slit, Ah'm thinking," he jeered, and hooted with glee at his threat. "That'd maybe spoil yer bonnie looks."

Martin, however slow his mental processes, was physically alert enough. From his boyhood he had been trained



to proficiency in games that demanded a steady eye and quick responses.

Greg took another step forward, lifted his razor and made a wild lunging slash.

Martin had been waiting for that. His arm shot out, and he caught and gripped Greg's wrist.

"Och! Me hand!" Greg cried out. The razor fell harmlessly on the floor between them.

"Mind me hand," he repeated plaintively.

Martin was afraid of more strategy. "You weren't going to be so careful of my throat," he said. "Now will you go back to bed?"

Greg did not answer. He was swaying on his feet, his eyes were half closed, the flush had died from his face.

"Here, you're not going to faint, are you?" asked Martin, still suspicious of some trick. He loosed his grip of that injured hand, bent slightly, and taking hold of Greg, lifted him without any great effort and laid him on the bed.

He lay there without movement. He looked a poor, weak, pitiful thing, slight and helpless. Martin forgot the attack that had been made upon him. He was

suddenly remorseful and tender. He examined Greg's wounded hand, but if it had begun to bleed again the blood had not yet soaked through the bandage; the fingers were very cold. Martin lifted the limp body again, put Greg back into bed and covered him up.

He was afraid for a moment that the man might be dead. He bent over him and listened to his breathing. It was slow and rather irregular, as was also the pulse that he examined.

He wondered uneasily if he ought to call Margaret.

But even as he put his hand into his pocket to take out the key, Greg opened his eyes.

"Ye're gey strong," he said, and smiled feebly.

"I say, I hope I didn't hurt you," said Martin anxiously.

"I'll do. Let me be," replied Greg, and closed his eyes again.

Martin watched him for a few minutes and then, after replacing the razor on the dressing table, returned to his armchair.

He found, astonishingly, that the time was only half past three.

*(This story will be concluded in the May number.)*



## AT THE LAST

By Witter Bynner

THERE'S no denying  
That it matters little,  
When through a narrow door  
We enter a room together,  
Which goes after, which before.

Perhaps you are not dying:  
Perhaps—there is no knowing—  
I shall slip by and turn and laugh with you  
Because it mattered so little,  
The order of our going.



IF our air castles should materialize, most of us would realize that nature never intended us for architects.



# BALLAD OF TWO SEAS

By George Sterling

Of course you have read Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner." Then this "Ballad of Two Seas" will thrill you—though it is not an imitation or an echo. Read it. You can then no longer lament (if you ever did) that great poetry is not being written today.

“WHEREFOR thy woe these many years,  
O hermit by the sea?  
What is the grief the winds awake,  
And waters cry to thee?”

“It was in piracy we sailed,  
Great galleons to strip.  
On a far day, on a far sea,  
We took her father's ship.

Red-sided rocked the *Rey del Sur*  
Whenas its deck we won.  
I slew before her eyes divine  
Her father and his son.

There was no sin I had not sinned,  
On deep sea and ashore;  
But when I looked in those great eyes  
Villain was I no more.

I, captain, claimed her as my prize,  
Tho maids in common were.  
Alone 'mid that fell company  
I cast my lot with her.

They put us in an open boat  
With four days' food and drink;  
Then slipped those traitor topsails down  
Beyond the ocean's brink.

Night came, and morn, but rose no sail  
On that horizon verge;  
I took the oars and set our prow  
Against the lessening surge.

It was scant provender we had,  
Tho she was unaware;  
Right soon I feared, and by deceit  
I gave her all my share.



## THE SMART SET

She would not speak; she scarce would look;  
 Her pain was past my cure.  
 Red-scuppered in our hells of dream  
 Wallowed the *Rey del Sur*.

On a far day, on a far sea,  
 Our shallop southward crept;  
 With weary arms and splitten lips  
 I labored—and she wept.

Dawn upon dawn, dark upon dark,  
 Nor ever land nor wind!  
 The nights were chill, the stars were keen,  
 The sun swung hot and blind.

Our drink and food were long since gone. . . .  
 We laid us down to die. . . .  
 Then came a booming of the surf,  
 And palm trees met mine eye.

I steered us through the broken reef;  
 Fainting, I won to shore;  
 I gazed upon her changed face,  
 But she on mine no more.

Below the palms I buried her  
 Whose bale star I had been.  
 And since, by this bleak coast of snows,  
 I sorrow for my sin.

There was no other of our kind  
 That had her heavenly face.  
 On a far Day, by a far Sea,  
 I trust to know her grace."



THE Suffragette—I am a self-made woman, sir. Do you understand?  
 HE—You've made yourself plain, all right.



SOMETIMES the woman a man marries proves to be a riddle he can't give up.



TRAVEL—Opportunity for boredom elsewhere.



# THE MOBLED KING

By Max Beerbohm

Max Beerbohm is one of the few original thinkers of today. There is no writer in English who enjoys a greater reputation for cleverness, and there are only two men in England who are classed with him. He is probably best known in America through his novel, "Zuleika Dobson," the most original book of its year. The securing of this article from his pen is a real magazine achievement; and every person who has ever pondered over the amazing statues we erect in our great cities will appreciate the views expressed here.

JUST as a memorial, just to perpetuate in one's mind the dead man in whose image and honor it has been erected, this statue is better than any that I have seen. . . . No, pedantic reader: I ought *not* to have said, "than any other that I have seen." Except in shrouded and distorted outline, I have not seen this statue.

Not as an image, then, can it be extolled by me. And I am bound to say that even as an honor it seems to me more than dubious. Commissioned and designed and chiseled and set up in all reverence, it yet serves very well the purpose of a guy. This does not surprise you. You are familiar with a host of statues that are open to precisely that objection. Westminster Abbey abounds in them. They confront you throughout London and the provinces. They stud the Continent. Rare indeed is the statue that can please the well-wishers of the person portrayed.

Nor in every case is the sculptor to blame. There is in the art of sculpture itself a quality intractable to the aims of personal portraiture. Sculpture, just as it cannot fitly record the gesture of a moment, is discommoded by personal idiosyncrasies. The details that go to compose this or that gentleman's appearance—such as the little wrinkles around his eyes, and the way his hair grows, and the special convolutions of

his ears—all these, presentable on canvas, or evocable by words, are not right matter for the chisel or for the mould and furnace. Translated into terms of bronze or marble, howsoever cunningly, these slight and trivial things cease to be trivial and slight. They assume a ludicrous importance. No man is worthy to be reproduced as bust or statue. To reproduce him so is inevitably to make him more or less ridiculous. And if sculpture is too august to deal with what a man has received from his Maker, how much less ought it to be bothered about what he has received from his hosiery and tailor! Sculpture's province is the soul. The most concrete, it is also the most spiritual of the arts. The very heaviness and stubbornness of its material, precluding it from happy dalliance with us fleeting individual creatures, fit it to cope with that which in mankind is permanent and universal. It can through the symbol give us incomparably the type. Wise is that sculptor who, when portray an individual he must, treats arbitrarily the mere actual husk, and strives but to show the soul. Of course, he must first catch that soul. What M. Rodin knew about the character and career of Mr. George Wyndham, or about the character and career of Mr. Bernard Shaw, was not, I hazard, worth knowing; and Mr. Shaw is handed down by him to posterity as a sort of



bearded lady, and Mr. Wyndham as a sort of beardless one. But about Honoré de Balzac he knew much. Balzac he understood. Balzac's work, Balzac's soul, in that great rugged figure aspiring and inflexible, he gave us with a finality that could have been achieved through no other art than sculpture.

There is a close kinship between that statue of Balzac and this statue of which I am to tell you. Both induce, above all, a profound sense of unrest, of heroic will to overcome all obstacles. The will to compass self-expression, the will to emerge from darkness to light, from formlessness to form, from nothing to everything—this it is that I find in either statue; and this it is in virtue of which the Balzac has unbeknown a brother on the Italian seaboard.

There stands—or rather struggles—on his pedestal this younger brother, in strange contrast with the scenery about him. Mildly, behind his back, the sea laps the shingle. Mildly, in front of him, sheer from the other side of the road, stand some of those mountains whereby the Earth, before she settled down to cool, compassed—she, too—some sort of self-expression. Mildly around his pedestal, among rusty anchors strewn there on the grass between road and beach, sit the fishermen, mending their nets or their sails, or whittling bits of wood. In their air of detachment, despite propinquity, they are very like to those peasants whom in early Italian paintings you see around this or that Saint at the moment of his martyrdom—peasants going quietly on with their work in the field or forest; not, you guess, unkind peasants, really, but just minding their own business a trifle overmuch, and carrying conscientiousness a shade too far. What would you say of those peasants if it were proved to you that they were responsible for the martyrdom and were slyly reveling in it? What will you say of these fishermen when . . . but I outstrip my narrative.

I had no inkling of tragedy when first I saw the statue. I did not even know it was a statue. I had made by night the short journey from Genoa to this place; and, driving along the coast road

to the hotel that had been recommended, I passed what in the starlight looked like nothing but an elderly woman mounted on a square pedestal and gazing out seaward—a stout, elderly, lonely woman in a poke bonnet, indescribable except by that old Victorian term “a party,” and as unlike Balzac's younger brother as only Sarah Gamp's elder sister could be. How, I wondered in my hotel, came the elder sister of Sarah Gamp to be here in Liguria and in the twentieth century? How clomb she, puffing and panting, onto that pedestal? For what argosy of gin was she straining her old eyes seaward? I knew there would be no sleep for me until I had solved these problems; and I went forth afoot along the way I had come. The moon had risen; and presently I saw in the clear distance the “party” who so intrigued me. Eminent, amorphous, mysterious, there she stood, immobile, voluminous, ghastly beneath the moon. By a slight shoreward lift of crinoline, as against the seaward protrusion of poke bonnet, a grotesque balance was given to the unshapely shape of her. For all her uncanniness, I thought I had never seen any one, male or female, old or young, look so hopelessly common. I felt that by daylight a noble vulgarity might be hers. In the watches of the night she was hopelessly, she was transcendently common.

Little by little, as I came nearer, she ceased to illude me, and I began to think of her as “it.” What “it” was, however, I knew not until I was at quite close quarters to the pedestal it rose from. There, on the polished granite, was carved this legend:

A  
UMBERTO I<sup>o</sup>

And instinctively, as my eye traveled up, my hand leapt to the salute; for I stood before the veiled image of a dead king, and had been guilty of a misconception that dishonored him.

Standing respectfully at one angle and another, I was able to form, by the outlines of the gray sheeting that enveloped him, some rough notion of his posture and his costume. Round what was evidently his neck the sheeting was constricted by ropes; and the height and



girth of the bundle above—to half-closed eyes, even now, an averted poke bonnet—gave token of a tall helmet with a luxuriant shock of plumes waving out behind. Immediately beneath the ropes, the breadth and sharpness of the bundle hinted at epaulettes. And the protrusion that had seemed to be that of a wind-blown crinoline was caused, I thought, by the king having his left hand thrust well out to grasp the hilt of his inclined sword. Altogether, I had soon builded a clear enough idea of his aspect; and I promised myself a curious gratification in comparing anon this idea with his aspect as it really was.

Yes, I took it for granted that the expectant statue was to be unveiled within the next few days. I was glad to be in time—not knowing in how terribly good time I was—for the ceremony. Not since my early childhood had I seen the unveiling of a statue; and on that occasion I had struck a discordant note by weeping bitterly. I dare say you know that statue of William Harvey which stands on the Lees at Folkestone. You say you were present at the unveiling? Well, I was the child who cried. I had been told that William Harvey was a great and good man who discovered the circulation of the blood; and my mind had leapt, in all the swiftness of its immaturity, to the conclusion that his statue would be a bright blood-red. Cruel was the thrill of dismay I had when at length the cord was pulled and the sheeting slid down, revealing so dull a sight . . .

Contemplating the veiled Umberto, I remembered that sight, remembered those tears unworthy (as my nurse told me) of a little gentleman. Years had passed. I was grown older and wiser. I had learned to expect less of life. There was no fear that I should disgrace myself in the matter of Umberto.

I was not so old, though, nor so wise, as I am now. I expected more than there is of Italian speed, and less than there is of Italian subtlety. A whole year has passed since first I set eyes on veiled Umberto. And Umberto is still veiled.

And veiled for more than a whole year,

as I now know, had Umberto been before my coming. Four years before that, the municipal council had voted the money for him. His father, of sensational memory, was here already, in the middle of the main piazza, of course. And Garibaldi was hard by; so was Mazzini; so was Cavour. Umberto was still implicit in a block of marble, high upon one of the mountains of Carrara. The task of educating him was given to a promising young sculptor who lived here. Down came the block of marble, and was transported to the studio of the promising young sculptor; and out, briskly enough, mustachios and all, came Umberto. He looked very regal, I am sure, as he stood glaring around with his prominent marble eyeballs, and snuffing the good fresh air of the world as far as might be into shallow marble nostrils. He looked very authoritative and fierce and solemn, I am sure. He made, anyhow, a deep impression on the mayor and councillors, and the only question was just where he should be erected. The granite pedestal had already been hewn and graven; but a worthy site was to seek. Outside the railway station? He would obstruct the cabs. In the Giardino Pubbico? He would clash with Garibaldi. Every councillor had a pet site, and every other one a pet objection to it. That strip of waste ground where the fishermen sat pottering? It was too humble, too far from the center of things. Meanwhile, Umberto stayed in the studio. Dust settled on his epaulettes. A year went by. Spiders ventured to spin their webs from his plumes to his mustachios. Another year went by. Whenever the councillors had nothing else to talk about, they talked about the site for Umberto.

Presently they became aware that among the poorer classes of the town had arisen a certain hostility to the statue. The councillors suspected that the priesthood had been at work. The forces of reaction against the forces of progress! Very well! The councillors hurriedly decided that the best available site, on the whole, was that strip of waste ground where the fishermen sat potter-



ing. The pedestal was promptly planted. Umberto was promptly wrapped up, put on a trolley, wheeled to the place, and hoisted into position. The date of the unveiling was fixed. The mayor had already composed his speech, and was getting it by heart. Around the pedestal the fishermen sat pottering. It was not observed that they received any visits from the priests.

But priests are subtle; and it is a fact that three days before the date of the unveiling the fishermen went, all in their black Sunday clothes, and claimed audience of the mayor. He laid aside the MS. of his speech, and received them affably. Old Agostino, their spokesman, he whose face is so marvelously wrinkled, lifted his quavering voice. He told the mayor, with great respect, that the rights of the fishermen had been violated. That piece of ground had for hundreds of years belonged to them. They had not been consulted about that statue. They did not want it there. It was in the way, and must (said Agostino) be removed. At first the mayor was inclined to treat the deputation with a light good humor, and to resume the study of his MS. But Agostino had a MS. of his own. This was a copy of a charter whereby, before mayors and councillors were, the right to that piece of land had been granted in perpetuity to the fisherfolk of the district. The mayor, not committing himself to any opinion of the validity of the document, said that he . . . but there, it is tedious to report the speeches of mayors. Agostino told his mayor that a certain great lawyer would be arriving from Genoa tomorrow. It were tedious to report what passed between that great lawyer and the mayor and councillors assembled. Suffice it that the councillors were frightened, the date of the unveiling was postponed, and the whole matter, referred to high authorities in Rome, went darkly drifting into some form of litigation, and there abides.

Technically, then, neither side may claim that it has won. The statue has not been unveiled. But the statue has not been displaced. Practically, though, and morally, the palm is, so far, to the

fishermen. The pedestal does not really irk them at all. On the contrary, it and the sheeting do cast for them in the heat a pleasant shadow, of which (the influence of Fleet Street, once felt, never shaken off, forces me to say) they are not slow to avail themselves. And the cost of the litigation comes not, you may be sure, out of their light old pockets, but out of the coffers of some pious rich folk hereabouts. The Pope remains a prisoner in the Vatican? Well, here is Umberto, a kind of hostage. Yet with what a difference! Here is no spiritual king stripped of earthy kingship. Here is an earthly king kept swaddled up day after day, to be publicly ridiculous. The fishermen, as I have said, pay him no heed. The mayor, passing along the road, looks straight in front of him, with an elaborate assumption of unconcern. So do the councillors. But there are others who look maliciously up at the hapless figure. Now and again there comes a monk from the monastery on that hill yonder. He laughs into his beard as he goes by. Two by two, in their gray cloaks and their blue mantillas, the little orphan girls are sometimes marched past. There they go, as I write. Not malice, but a vague horror, is in the eyes *they* turn. Umberto, belike, is used as a means to frighten them when, or lest, they offend. The nun in whose charge they are crosses herself.

Yet it is recorded of Umberto that he was kind to little children. That, indeed, is one of the few things recorded of him. Fierce though he looked, he was, for the most part, it must be confessed, null. He seldom asserted himself. There was so little of that for him to assert. He had, therefore, no personal enemies. In a negative way, he was popular, and was positively popular, for a while, after his assassination. And this it is that makes him now the less able, poor fellow, to understand and endure the shame he is put to. "*Stat rex indignatus.*" He does try to assert himself now—does strive, by day and by night, poor petrefact, to rip off these fell and clownish integuments. Of his elder brother in Paris he has never heard; but he knows that Lazarus arisen from the



tomb did not live in graveclothes. He forgets that after all he is only a statue. To himself he is still a king—or at least a man who was once a king and, having done no wrong, ought not now to be insulted. If he had in his composition one marble grain of humor, he might . . . but no, a joke against oneself is always cryptic. Fat men are not always the best drivers of fat oxen; and cryptic statues cannot be depended on to see cryptic jokes.

If Umberto could grasp the truth that no man is worthy to be reproduced as a statue; if he could understand, once and for all, that the unveiling of him were itself a notable disservice to him, then might his wrath be turned to acquiescence, and his acquiescence to gratitude, and he be quite happy hid. Is he, really, more ridiculous now than he always was? If you be an extraordinary man, as was his father, win a throne by all means: you will fill it. If your son be another extraordinary man, he will fill it when his turn comes. But if that son be, alas, he most probably will be, like Umberto, quite ordinary, then let parental love triumph over pride of dynasty: advise your boy to abdicate at the earliest possible moment. A great king—what better? But it is ill that a throne be sat by one whose legs dangle uncertainly towards the dais, and ill that a crown settle down over the tip of the nose. And the very fact that for quite inadequate kings our hands do leap to the salute, instinctively, does but make us, on reflection, the more conscious of the whole absurdity. Even than a great man on a throne we can, when we reflect, imagine something—ah, not something better perhaps, but something more remote from absurdity. Let us say that Umberto's father was great, as well as extraordinary. He was accounted great enough to be the incarnation of a great idea. "United Italy"—oh, yes, a great idea, a charming idea: in the sixties I should have been all for it. But how shall I or any other impartial person write odes to the reality? What people in all this exquisite peninsula are today the happier for the things done by and through Vittorio Emmanuele Liberator?

The question is not merely rhetorical. There is the large class of politicians, who would have had no scope in the old days. They, I presume, are the happier. And there are many men who in the old days would have been fishing or ploughing, but now strut in this and that uniform. There passes between me and the sea, as I write—how opportunely people do pass here!—a little man with a peaked cap, and blue breeches with yellow stripes, and a little sword. His prime duty is to see that none of his fellow peasants shall carry home a bucket of sea water. For there is salt in sea water; and peasants, like the rest of us, need salt; and heavily, because they must have it or sicken, salt is taxed; and this passing sentinel is to prevent them from cheating the Revenue by recourse to the sea which, though here it is, they must not regard as theirs. What of those who, with the best will in the world, cannot afford to buy salt? They must take the due diseases, they and their children. What becomes of the money paid by the rest? Some of it, doubtless, goes to the less scrupulous of the politicians—them and their children. The most of it goes to the building of battleships, cruisers, gunboats and so forth. What are these for? Why, for Italy to play at being a great European power with, of course.

It is silly of the Italians to humor her? But you English, ever belching out battleships, cruisers, gunboats, and so forth—why should *you* sneer? You say that you at any rate do need these things: they are necessary to your survival. True; and I admit that I spoke harshly. But the fact that you live surrounded by barbarians doesn't acquit you of barbarism. You have laid hands on as much of the world as you can conveniently handle; and more. It is barbarous that other nations should itch to oust you. But I see no sign in you that in their position you would behave seemlier. Granted, for sake of argument, that you are the salt of the earth, and that it is for the world's good that you should guard yourselves as jealously as the salt of the sea is guarded here from these wistful peasants—how crushing is



the indictment of mankind at large! We don't know for just how many thousands of centuries mankind has existed. Take the lowest computation. Is it possible to base on that a belief that mankind will ever cease to be essentially level with the brutes? Any great man on a throne is saliently absurd, in the long run, by reason of his impotence. Howsoever fine the idea he stand for, it will avail nothing. Nothing but folly and evil will come of it. United Italy! In the little blue bay behind Umberto, while I write, there lies at anchor an Italian gunboat. Opportunely again? I can but assure you that it really and truly is there. It has been there for two days. It delights the fishermen. They say it is "*bella e polita com' un fiore*." They stand shading their eyes towards it, smiling and proud, heirs of all the ages, neglecting their sails and nets and spars of wood. They can imagine nothing better than it. They see nothing at all sinister or absurd about it, these simple fellows. And simple Umberto, their captive, strives to wheel round on his pedestal and to tear but a peephole in his sheeting. He would be glad could he feast but one eye on this bit of national glory. But he remains helpless—helpless as a Sultania made ready for the Bosphorus, helpless as a pig is in a poke.

It enrages him that he who was so eminently respectable in life should be made so ludicrous on his eminence after death. He is bitter at the inertia of the men who set him up. Were he an ornament of the Church, not of the State that he served so conscientiously, how very different would be the treatment of his plight! If he were a Saint, occluded thus by the municipality, how many the prayers that would be muttered, the candles promised, for his release! There would be processions, too; and who knows but that there might even be a miracle vouchsafed, a rending of the veil? The only procession that passes him is that of the intimidated orphans. No heavenly power intervenes for him—perhaps (he bitterly conjectures) for fear of offending the Vatican. Sirocco, now and again, blows furiously at his back, but never splits the sheeting.

Rain often soaks it, never rots it. There is no help for him. He stands a mock to the pious, a shame and incubus to the emancipated; received, yet hushed up; exalted, yet made a fool of; taken and left; a monument to fate's malice.

From under the hem of his weather-beaten domino, always, he just displays, with a sort of tragic coquetry, the toe of a stout and serviceable marble boot. And this, I have begun to believe, is all that I shall ever see of him. Else might I not be writing about him; for else had he not so haunted me. If I knew myself destined to see him—to see him steadily and see him whole—no matter how many years hence, I could forthwith think about other things. I had hoped that by this essay I might rid my mind of him. He is inexcutable, confound him! His pedestal draws me to itself with some such fascination as had the altar of the unknown god for the wondering Greek. I try to distract myself by thinking of other images—images that I have seen. I think of Bartolommeo Colleoni riding greatly forth under the shadow of the church of Saint John and Saint Paul. Of Mr. Peabody I think, cosy in his armchair behind the Royal Exchange; of Nelson above the sparrows, and of Perseus among the pigeons; of golden Albert, and of Harvey the not red. Up looms Umberto, uncouthly casting them one and all into the shade. I think of other statues that I have *not* seen—statues suspected of holding something back from even the clearest-eyed men who have stood beholding and soliciting them. But how obvious, beside Umberto, the Sphinx would be! And Memnon, how vainly he sits waiting for the dawn!

Matchless as a memorial, then, I say again, this statue is. And as a work of art it has at least the advantage of being beyond criticism. In my hot youth, I wrote a plea that all the statues in the streets and squares of London should be extirpated and, according to their materials, smashed or melted. From an esthetic standpoint, I went a trifle too far: London has a few good statues. From a humane standpoint, my plea was all wrong. Let no violence be done to the



effigies of the dead. There is disrespect in setting up a dead man's effigy and then not unveiling it. But there would be no disrespect, and there would be no violence, if the bad statues familiar to London were ceremoniously veiled, and their inscribed pedestals left just as they are. That is an ideal which occurred to me soon after I saw the veiled Umberto. Mr. Birrell has now stepped in and forestalled my advocacy. *Pereant qui*—but no, who could wish that charming man to perish? The realization of that ideal is what matters.

Let an inventory be taken of those statues. Let it be submitted to Lord Rosebery, and he be asked to tick off all those statesmen, poets, philosophers and other personages about whom he would wish to orate. Then let the list be passed on to other orators, until every statue on it shall have its particular spokesman. Then let the dates for the various veilings be appointed. If there be four or five veilings every week, I conceive that the whole list will be exhausted in two years or so. And my enjoyment of the reported speeches will not be the less keen because I can so well imagine them . . . "In conclusion, Lord Rosebery said that the keynote to the character of the man in whose honor

they were gathered together today was, first and last, integrity. (Applause.) He did not say of him that he had been infallible. Which of us was infallible? (Laughter.) He heard a laugh. But we lived in times when it was dangerous for one who occupied, as he did, a position of voluntary independence, to question the infallibility of our elected rulers. This he would say, that the great man whose statue they were looking on for the last time had been actuated throughout his career by no motive but the desire to do that, and that only, which would conduce to the honor and to the stability of the country that gave him birth. Of him it might truly be said, as had been said of another, 'That which he had to give, he gave.' (Loud and prolonged applause.) His Lordship then pulled the cord, and the sheeting rolled up into position . . ."

Not, however, because those speeches will so edify and soothe me, nor merely because those veiled statues will make lovelier the city I was born in, do I so feverishly thrust on you my proposition. The wish in me is that posterity be haunted by our dead heroes even as I am by Umberto. Rather hard on posterity, you say? Well, the prevision of its plight would cheer me in mine.



**B**ILL collectors have a promising future.



**S**OME wives are not "jewels" until they are in a casket.



**G**OOD intentions furnish smooth paving material—hence the temptation to exceed the speed limit.



# WILLOW SONG

By Robert Loveman

WILLOW, willow, in the spring,  
When my heart is hungering,  
First of all thou then art seen  
In a shimmering gown of green,  
Then full soon that thou art found,<sup>1</sup>  
Thy garments trailing to the ground.  
Do dryads deem thee, flowing there,  
An emerald fountain in the air?  
Ne'er a willow weeps for me,  
Thou gracile, verdant ecstasy,  
But in rapt beauty thou dost gleam,  
O'er the meadow, by the stream;  
Willow, willow, in the spring,  
When my heart is hungering.



# OL' MARSE WINTER

By Mary Alice Ogden

ALL de streams a-runnin',  
Wind am blowin' sof'—  
Ol' Marse Winter  
Sweep de snowdrif's off.

Rain along de hillside,  
Swishin' roun' de do'—  
Ol' Marse Winter  
Scrubbin' out de flo'.

Golden sun a-shinin',  
Thrushes 'gin ter sing—  
Ol' Marse Winter  
Gwine ter marry Spring.



# THE COLUMN

By Arthur Stringer

WHEN Cornelia Rossiter obtained her final decree of divorce from Egbert Rossiter, who was three years her junior, it was done as Mrs. Rossiter always preferred to do things, quietly and respectably. The suit was uncontested, and there was no claim for alimony.

There ensued, of course, much newspaper talk, but none of it was definite and none of it proved authoritative. There were, however, those among Mrs. Rossiter's old set who claimed that Cornelia, in this case, had paid too dearly for her sense of the decorous. When, five years before, her one and only novel had been published, it was claimed that the Rossiters had not been living within their means, and that Cornelia even then was keeping an iron in the fire, the iron in this case taking the form of a gold-banded and delicately chased fountain pen.

Those means, however, had been ample to provide the Rossiters with their summer home at Lenox and their city house on Park Avenue. For the latter it also provided such decorative assets as a brougham, and a coachman and footman in black liveries with steel blue velvet collars, and a man at the door in the same livery, and a victoria for Cornelia herself, since Cornelia was old-fashioned enough to prefer horses to motors.

But with these so obviously a thing of the past, it was claimed that Cornelia Rossiter's social career had come to a close. And this might indeed have been the case had it not been for the Column.

It was really the Column which was the cause of her reinstatement, though this fact, of course, Cornelia Rossiter

would never openly acknowledge. But in her gently decorous peregrinations about the editorial field, a field across which she moved with the twilight authority of her once much discussed society novel, she encountered the publisher of an illustrated weekly who had resolved to give more space to the "woman interest" of his paper. He was in search of someone who knew society and could report on its movements, someone, other than the dowdy women graduates of daily journalism, who could toy about the fringes of travel and fashion, and contribute what he called "tone" to his Woman's Section. In Mrs. Rossiter, he believed, he had found the woman he wanted. Her life had been a varied one. She had traveled much, and had met the people most worth meeting. She talked well, some said almost too well; and to the thread of her discourse she invariably lent that *distingué* air which can come only through the adroit interpolation of the French phrase and the inclusion of the apposite Parisian *mot*.

Comer Snaith, the owner of the weekly, was not in a position to pay Cornelia Rossiter the salary he had hoped to pay. But he was at pains to point out to her the perquisites which would go with such a position as hers. And as the paper prospered it would be possible to increase her salary. It could begin, of course, with a small weekly honorarium—and Cornelia Rossiter, contemplating daily labor for the first time in her life, found something wordlessly assuaging in that euphemistic word, "honorarium." But he felt sure their new department would merit more money being put into it as time went



on. And he felt equally sure that Mrs. Rossiter was the woman to make it a success.

It was in this way that Cornelia Rossiter became the "Lady Manners" of the *Weekly Planet*. She had hesitated long over a pen name, but in the end "Lady Manners," with its assumption of aristocracy, its nuance of quiet dignity, won the day. A little thrill of pride even sped up and down her body as she beheld that new name, made into a zinc etching from her own acute-angled handwriting, at the bottom of her first contribution to the *Planet*. This thrill of pride vanished before her sorrow in discovering what the compositors had done to so many of her choicest French words, it is true, for the one cross of her opening career was the fate of her foreign phrases at the printer's hand. But the Column had come into existence. And Cornelia Rossiter found herself launched upon a new and a sedately varied life.

More than even in the days of the Park Avenue mansion she was meticulous in the matter of keeping up appearances. A new dignity came to her, born of a new consciousness of power. She realized the necessity of dressing well and of keeping up an impressively comfortable suite in a comfortable apartment hotel. She caught at Comer Snaith's mention of perquisites, and in buying her gowns did not neglect to announce her association with the fashion department of the *Weekly Planet*. This obtained for her an even more liberal discount than she had expected. An equally liberal discount resulted in the matter of the hotel suite, after Lady Manners had chatted halfway through her column on the comforts of the modern hotel in general and her own hotel in particular.

As the Column became better known, Lady Manners was even sought out by enterprising modistes and energetic tradesmen and florists and importers, that some little word might be said of their many interests. But she was not venal. Before everything else she placed the Column and its interests. But in that weekly chit-chat of personal expe-

riences and personal impressions, of a gracious lady's humorous thoughts and moods and accidents of everyday life, Cornelia Rossiter found ample opportunity to reward those whom she deemed worthy of reward. As, under her guidance, the paper gave more and more space to the reporting of society's activities, Lady Manners found her mail more and more crowded with intimations of impending dinners and invitations to approaching parties and informal notes as to marriages and engagements and weekend visitors. She came to be sought after by younger hostesses, for to have Cornelia Rossiter to dinner meant to have all New York read about that dinner before the week was out.

In the first month or two of her new work, Lady Manners had been somewhat dubious as to the possibility of sustaining her burden of splendor on a salary so meager. But she soon saw how mistaken had been her fears. She had overlooked that power which came to her as a moulder of public opinion. Theater managers who realized the force of the passing whisper, and the box-office worth of the disinterested word, rarely neglected to send her seats for their productions. Candy makers besieged her with their new brands of confectionery. Florists kept their names green to her eyes, that their handiwork might not be overlooked in later recountals of wedding decorations. Publishers showered her with books, in the hope that some echo of her reading might find its way into her column. Theatrical stars, with the immediacy of their profession, not infrequently sent her pieces of jewelry for her personal adornment. Now and then a less sophisticated social climber even sought to buy the power of the press. But Cornelia Rossiter was not the type of woman to be bought and sold. She obliterated the imprudent social climber under the weight of her affronted dignity, as promptly as she had annihilated the crass Florida hotel owner who calmly offered four weeks in his hostelry for a favorable paragraph or two in Lady Manners's *causerie*. She did speak nicely of a steamship line now and then, when that line impressed her as being courte-



ous and generous to their patrons (extending to her a suite *de luxe* at the cost of a first class cabin berth), and she felt morally obliged to help along those health resorts which had welcomed her into their midst and demonstrated their wholesomeness as well as their hospitality.

But Cornelia Rossiter protested that she would never prostitute her column. It had come to mean too much to her. She fell into the habit, as time went on, of speaking a little languidly of her journalistic work as a grind, of regarding the perpetuation of a department as a weekly oppression. This deprecatory attitude, if not actually forced upon her, was at least an aspiration toward that fastidious dilettanteism which her activities in the social world seemed to call for. It was reflected in her abhorrence of typewriters, in her boudoir-like office at the top of the *Planet* building, which, even after its translation into a period room, she affected to dislike, spending in it only those hours actually demanded by her editorial obligations.

Yet, if she spoke lightly of the Column, she knew, at heart, that it was an open sesame to all those circles from which the wheeling seasons would otherwise have torn her. The maintenance of that column was more than mere labor to her. She actually lived in it and through it. It became a sort of refuge from life's beleaguering years of desolation. It kept her youthfully active and youthfully interested. Through it she could still talk to her old-time circle, as to a ring of friends about her fireside. She partook of its dignity. And even those not of the circle, the mere outsiders, found a relish in the more intimate note, in the naïve personalities, in the quaint confessional meanderings and the artless *décolletage* of Lady Manners's style. It made Lady Manners herself a personality in the world of letters. It converted her into the confidante of young girls, the arbiter of social adjustments, the articulate voice of inarticulated good taste, the adviser and counsellor of the home, the encourager of youthful genius, the dignified censor of those tendencies which

might, if left unrebuked, threaten the graciousness of life and the well-being of polite society.

As the Column became more and more talked about Cornelia Rossiter became more and more conscious of her responsibilities. She was now more than a figure in society; she was a figure in life itself. She maintained an engagement list that was presidential in its inexorability. Her daily mail, augmenting itself into a burden too heavy to be handled, made it necessary for her to hire a private secretary, a girl of nineteen years, who in payment for her labors accepted an honorarium of six dollars a week in the fierce hope of some fine day being deputized to the fringes of fashionable life as a social reporter. Lady Manners made certain exactions of her managing editor. She asked for more space, and made suggestions as to better taste in the choice of illustrations. She even went so far as to argue for a finer grade of paper for the *Planet*, and when confronted by an array of objections, quietly acknowledged that she knew nothing about the business side of life. But before the end of a month the Woman's Section appeared on toned paper. The contributors to the Column grew in number, clustered about it, diversified it with their thousand fluttering personalities, like ivy clambering about a supporting plinth of marble. The Column itself took on a dignity and a solidity in some way suggestive of immutability. It became a fixture, a tradition in the land.

Cornelia Rossiter began to realize that she had created an institution, and for that creation had obtained no adequate reward. She became conscious of the fact that she was being tragically underpaid, even in the face of the countless gratuities which the interests of the Column evoked. Notwithstanding these natural donations and tributes and billets and rebates, Lady Manners found it impossible to live within her means. She had her appearances to keep up, and those appearances constantly merged more and more toward the pictorial and the costly. When she interviewed Comer Snaith on the matter, and found that the



owner of the paper was not in a position to advance her salary since all the *Planet's* spare money was being put into its new financial section, her first impulse was to stand from under the Column and let it collapse, as collapse it must.

But devastation so tragic was more than her imagination could endure. The Column was too much a part of her life to be lost. That voluptuous sense of power, that languid consciousness of being accepted as the voice on the pinnacle, was too sweet to be lightly surrendered. So Cornelia Rossiter turned her pen to other tasks. She reorganized her day and found time to write for the monthly magazines. When, now and then, a contribution appeared over her name, she found a way of drawing attention to it by a graciously humorous reference in the Column itself, or by a casual word or two artfully introduced in her society notes.

Then came a somewhat more disturbing day in Cornelia Rossiter's career as a journalist. It began with the casual visit of a prosperous land operator named Ashmun, an operator whose wife, of late, had shown many discreet kindnesses to the conductor of the *Planet's* weekly column. It was, indeed, Mrs. Ashmun who had openly and appreciatively described Lady Manners as "the little mother to all the world." So Cornelia Rossiter had come to look upon the Ashmuns as her friends, as persons to whom she might, in some vaguely apprehended day of vicissitude, possibly turn for help.

Ashmun himself approached the object of his visit both adroitly and deliberately. So circumspect was that approach, indeed, that the ground was covered before the steps were counted.

"I wanted to see Snaith himself," he casually explained. "But I find he's in Washington for the week."

"The financial end of the work keeps him away a great deal, I believe," admitted Lady Manners. She spoke vaguely, as a demonstration that this more sordid side of journalism did not intimately concern her.

"But, after all," continued Ashmun, "I can say what I have to even better

to you." He hesitated, however, filling in the gap by speaking approvingly of Lady Manners and her quaintly personal style, of her influence for good, of the value of her opinion. "And the reader always knows he's getting your real opinions!"

"Mr. Snaith never interferes with my column," acknowledged Cornelia Rossiter.

"Of course not," concurred Ashmun. "He can depend on your taste, on your judgment, naturally. And that's exactly why I'm going to state my case to you."

Her visitor went on to explain that he had not come to ask favors or even to strike a bargain. But the *Weekly Planet* reached that higher circle which the more febrile dailies failed to touch, and his subdivision and sale of the Amram Estate on Long Island was of particular interest to that higher circle. And the right word or two, at a time when everything was hanging in the balance, might mean prosperity to the cause he was espousing and a new and beautiful town on the map. Ashmun repeated that he could not ask favors. But the long and short of it was that, if Lady Manners might possibly say that small word or two, his company would deed her, quite gratuitously, a double view lot on the choicest crescent of the new suburb.

Cornelia Rossiter smiled a little condescendingly as she toyed with her gold-banded fountain pen.

"I have never helped along any cause, Mr. Ashmun, where I didn't feel justified in helping it. And I have never done so for money."

"That's precisely it, Mrs. Rossiter," broke in Ashmun. "Here is something which deserves encouragement, something that is being done in a nice way for nice people. It's something I'd be glad to have you look over yourself from end to end—something I'd like to have you investigate, from the bottom up."

"But how am I to investigate a business venture, when I know nothing whatever of business?"

"The thing to do is to go right over the ground, see everything for yourself—and at the same time pick out the two lots which you most prefer. It's not a



matter of money, Mrs. Rossiter. It's simply a matter of repaying a kindness by a kindness. I can have my car here any time this afternoon, or tomorrow. I can take you over the estate myself. Then you can see whether or not it is a movement worth helping along."

"But I can't promise any help, Mr. Ashmun, until I am convinced it is a venture worthy of the Column's support."

"Of course not. We couldn't ask for that support, Mrs. Rossiter, if we didn't think our cause deserved it," was the other's smilingly confident reply.

The result of Ashmun's good-humored solicitations was that Lady Manners eventually looked over the Amram Estate, from the well upholstered seat of the Ashmun touring car, and saw surveyors and graders and levelers at work, and was impressed by the beauty of the thought of a new city springing up, almost over night, where before there had been nothing but wilderness. Her imagination was touched by the thought of that new suburb's sudden burst into life. There was something pleasing and placative in the thought that she could be materially associated with both its birth and its triumph, that as it doubled and trebled in value her own lots would startlingly increase in worth. So it was with a touch of enthusiasm that she penned her laudatory paragraphs as to a charming new city of homes almost within sight of the flashing and shimmering waters of the Sound.

She was contemplating these paragraphs as they stood committed to type on the still moist-inked pages of the *Planet* when the telephone bell on her little rosewood desk shrilled out its authoritative summons. It was Comer Snaith's voice that spoke to her over the wire.

"Will you please come to my office?" this voice called up to her. "At once!"

Cornelia Rossiter sat at her desk for several moments, without moving, deeply resentful of the mandatory note in that summons. Her leisurely and quite unnecessary movements about her own room, before descent into an air so much

less Olympian, were a further protest against an authority which had plainly made itself over-peremptory.

If she bore herself with a gracious dignity, a self-possession bordering on indifference, as she entered Comer Snaith's private office, the owner of the *Planet* presented a figure startlingly in contrast to that of his visitor. He was pacing back and forth in the narrow area of his floor space, remarkably suggestive of a hyena, fretting back and forth behind its encaging bars. His face was colorless; his mien was that of a man in the final stages of some final exasperation.

He stopped short beside his desk as Mrs. Rossiter entered the room. He stared at her, almost helplessly, as though words were inadequate to express his feelings. Then he suddenly dropped into a chair and smote the open pages of the last edition with the palm of his hand.

"Well, what have you got to say for yourself?" he finally cried out; and the tones of that raucous and unexpected cry fell gratingly on Lady Manners's sensitive ears.

"In what respect, Mr. Snaith?" she inquired. She spoke with that acidulated sweetness which proclaimed that she at least was remaining mistress of her emotions.

"What've you got to say about *this*?" he demanded, shaking the open page of the paper before her. She could see that he was referring to the Ashmun paragraphs with which her column opened.

"Nothing whatever," she replied, coercing herself to that gentle modulation of tone which is the most effective reproof to all such *gaucherie*.

"Then I *have*!" cried Comer Snaith, suddenly standing up and confronting her. "You knew I've been trying to make the *Planet* a decent sheet. You knew I started this financial section to run down those bunco land sharks. You knew I was fighting those real estate wildcatters! You knew I was trying to round up Ashmun and every land crook of his type! And when I got out of town for a week, *you sold me out!*"



Cornelia Rossiter steadied herself by placing a gloved hand on the end of the desk beside which she stood.

"You say I sold you out?" she repeated, a quaver of startled wonder in her voice.

"Yes, you sold me out! The dirtiest sell-out a man ever got from his own gang!" cried Snaith, with an increasing passion which barbed his words with an increasing brutality. "You've killed my whole campaign against Ashmun! You've made me a monkey in the eyes of every newspaper man in this city! You took advantage of my absence from town. You took advantage of my belief in you. You took advantage of the freedom I'd given you on that page of yours. You sold me out in the worst way a man could be sold out."

"Just one moment, Mr. Snaith," intoned the still outwardly composed Mrs. Rossiter, raising her gloved finger with an authoritative gesture, which was quite lost on the person toward whom it was directed.

"No," barked back the other, "I've done my waiting. I've seen what you've been doing with this column for months past. And I've seen what the column has done for you. It's made you into the finest grafter that was ever in this office. It's taught you to graft on hotels and theaters, to graft on florists and dressmakers, to graft on new books and opera seats! You've been making *my* paper pay your way! It's been buying your dinners for you; it's been footing your traveling bills in free advertising; it's been furnishing your hotel suite with stuff you couldn't afford out of an honest salary! And now, by God, you think you can step up and be a landed proprietor over my carcass! You think you can tie me up in pink ribbon and hand me over to a wildcatter like Ashmun! Well, when you try that it's time to holler quits. And here's where *you* quit! You can go to the office and get your week's salary. From now on you're through with the *Weekly Planet*!"

Cornelia Rossiter sat very still in the chair into which she had sunk. Her wide and slightly vacuous eyes studied

the white face of the man staring so bitterly across the desk at her. In those widened eyes there was a look of child wonder, the inarticulate and infantile protest against an onslaught which she could not comprehend. She had always hated a scene. But her primary horror in the face of uttered brutalities was submerged by a greater emotion, a creeping and all-engulfing gray desolation which filled her world at the thought that she was no longer of the Column and the Column was no longer of her. From the midst of that desolation her startled soul rose to ask if what had been said of her could in any way be true: if she had indeed betrayed a trust, if she had exacted more than her due; if she had schemed and plotted and exploited what was not her own; if she had misused a trust to further ends that were wholly and selfishly her own. She looked back over the past, through which the Column seemed to tower with Ionic stateliness. She saw what it had meant to the emptier years of her later life. She saw how it had sustained and fed and clothed her, how it had brought her friends and power and happiness. She tried to tell herself that she had given something in return, that about her Column she had wreathed everything worthy, everything of moment in her life. But her thoughts swept back to Ashmun, and what she had done for Ashmun. And she began to see that she had indeed betrayed a trust, without quite comprehending what that trust had involved. And she saw that before all things she must deed her lot back to Ashmun.

"I understand," she said very quietly, as she rose from her chair. She did not realize that Comer Snaith, as he called up the pressroom and peremptorily ordered every man and wheel and cylinder to stop and await a new make-up, was essaying the last move of a hard-pressed general to retrieve a lost position. She merely realized that he neither saw nor heard her, that she was no longer a figure of any moment in his thoughts, a person of any significance to the *Weekly Planet*.

She turned about without further



speech and walked out of the room. She walked away slowly and quietly, but with the heavy steps of a crushed and broken woman.

She knew, in walking out of that office, that she was walking out of one world into another. How empty and faded and futile that outer and untried world was to be she did not at the moment quite comprehend. She was dazed by a sense of vast deprivation. Her misery was that of a mother from whom some last child had been torn.

It was during the weeks that followed that a full realization of her position came home to her. She began to see how much of her entire life had depended on the Column. Without that work she was without authority, without appeal or personality. Her river of mail withered and dried up into a trickle of tradesmen's bills. A creeping paralysis overtook her social activities. Her engagement list was no longer a thing of matutinal perplexity. Even her outside work, her spasmodic writing for the magazines, she soon came to see, had once found a market because it had emanated from the stately shadows of that same Column. Now, without that support, she could sell nothing. The young publisher who had once spoken so eagerly of her projected volume of "Memoirs and Memories" found his own memory strangely failing when she approached him with the introductory faded leaves of her already faded career.

She saw that the fight was a useless one. And dignified to the last, she decided that the realm of her former glory should not be the field of her final defeat. She found that she could live abroad much more cheaply than in New York. She knew what life would be, in some squalid European *pension*, the gray and empty years without aim or occupation, the meager companionship of neurasthenic exiles and weather-beaten haunters of cheap *table d'hôtes*, the ever lengthening autumnal loneliness, the final dissolution of the last thin links of friendship.

She made her preparations for departure as quietly as a bird taking up its impending seasonal migration. She

preferred going quietly. She seemed to accept her fate with that outward fortitude consistent with a lady of quality. But on the last day, as she stared about her denuded hotel suite, her face was heavy with a sense of tragedy. Her unuttered sorrow showed itself in the dusky hollows of temple and cheek, for of late she had not been eating as carefully and as regularly as before. She was studying, with stoic perplexity, the genteel shabbiness of her broadcloth traveling suit, when a bellboy came to her door with Comer Snaith's card in his hand.

The sight of that name brought a sense of compression to her bosom and a quaver to her fingers as she turned the card over and over before her meditative eyes. She had struggled for weeks to obliterate Snaith and the *Planet* from her memory. She had tried hard not to think of the kingdom from which she was an exile.

Her first impulse was to send back word that she was not at home. She did not hate this man who had brought all her universe down about her ears. Her resentment against him was something more abstract, more impersonal. She merely wished to forget him, as a patient who has suffered much wishes to forget the hospital walls which once housed that suffering. It was a matter of self-preservation, of saving some inner shred of serenity from the ruins of her existence. It was the same impulse that for months past had restrained her from looking into the pages of the *Planet*. She had no wish to reopen old wounds.

Then came a second and stronger impulse, an impulse arising out of that graciousness which she had once tried to make her guiding spirit in life. It was a perverse flowering of that gentility which had marked Lady Manners as a leader of her kind. She sent down word for Comer Snaith to come up.

Cornelia Rossiter had complete control of herself by the time he stepped into the room. She appeared much more at ease, indeed, than did her visitor. She could even force a wintry smile as she motioned him into a chair. But he remained standing.

"Mrs. Rossiter," he began in his



febrile and abrupt manner of speech, "I understand you're going to Europe."

She bowed gravely. "I could do my literary work better over there, I think," she told him.

"I'm sorry," he said, frowning a little and fretting with the hat he carried in his hands.

"Why?" she asked, with the faintest raise of her eyebrows. But he was not looking at her face.

"Look here, Mrs. Rossiter," he said—and for the first time as she studied him she saw how worn and gray his face was—"I went up in the air a few months ago, and I guess I said a lot of things a man ought t've been kicked for!"

She raised a gently protesting hand.

"On the contrary, Mr. Snaith, what you said was quite true. Only, at the time, I didn't understand."

"It wasn't all true," retorted Snaith. "I was wrapped up in that financial section. I was trying to give the *Planet* a new punch. It looked good to me, that muckraking campaign, and I thought it'd carry us into a new field. But I didn't know my paper. Our readers wouldn't swallow it. I've had to cut it out. We've been dropping, every week."

"I'm sorry," murmured the woman with the same wintry smile.

"I said a lot of things about that department of yours that weren't true," doggedly went on the other. "I can see it now. I said you were grafting on it. But you were putting more back into the paper than you ever took out. I see that now, since we stopped the column. We've got to have it back. We can't hold up without it. I thought we could, but I was wrong. And now I want to know if we can't get you back."

Her face was so white that he felt vaguely apprehensive that she was going to faint. But she sat quite steadily in the chair facing him.

"You want me to come back?" she

echoed, compelling herself to speak calmly.

"We want the department back," he went on with the defiant humility of a man of affairs coerced into eating crow, "and you're the only woman to handle it. I'm sorry for what I did. I guess I'm sorrier for what I said. But what I want to know is, can't you turn the page on that and come back?"

She sat for a full minute, in utter silence, studying his face with her abstracted and unseeing eyes. He noticed the slightly flaccid lips pucker spasmodically, and then fall into a firmer and more resolute line which disturbed him more than he was willing to acknowledge.

"Yes, I'll come back," she murmured, closing her eyes so that he might not see the sparkle of tears that had crept into them. Then she opened them again. Across the soft skies of her happiness a small cloud had stretched itself. "Yes, I'll come back," she repeated, "on one condition!"

There was a hardening about her lips which Snaith did not altogether like.

"On what condition?" he inquired.

The gaze with which she met his stare of wonder was both a narrower and a more combative one. He realized, as he watched her face, that she was at last an old woman. And he reminded himself of the necessity of being humble.

"On condition the *Planet* pays me for the steamer ticket I shan't be able to use!" was the ultimatum to which she attempted to give dignity by means of a majestic deliberateness.

Snaith did not look at her. He could not trust himself that far. Instead, he took a turn up and down the room, with his eyes fixed on the faded rug. He was once more remembering to be humble, but it cost an effort.

"All right," he finally replied, "we'll make good that passage money." But he sighed the sigh of a man whose will has been sacrificed on the altar of expediency.



AN original person is one who does the sort of things you've always wanted to do, but never dared.



# THE TRIBE

By Basil Macdonald Hastings

Here is a story about children, but not necessarily *for* children. The author has dedicated it to every reader who has not forgotten that he was once a child, and to every parent who has the courage to admit that children are not angels. These are real children in this story, and their doings will make the sourest of us chuckle. Mr. Hastings is well known as the editor of the *London Bystander*, and the author of "The New Sin" and other plays.

OUR garden was enormous—actually hedges and a mulberry tree. The hedges were absolutely right for ambuscades and sitting behind to eat all your sweets if you didn't want to give any away. Once the garden was all dug up into trenches in the most perfect manner (in connection with the drains) and the kids all played at the Boer War, which was on at the time. We had a genuine Spion Kop, where all the garden refuse had been piled up.

There was a fine conservatory sticking out into the garden. Stone steps led up to the door of it, first rate for reception of Indian chiefs and executions. You see, you said "Farewell to all my greatness" at the bottom of the steps, climbed up to the top and had your head slogged off. (Lionel was always the executioner, except when he had the toothache and stayed indoors. I had the job then, as I was the second eldest boy. My name's Stanley—but you'll get to know all the names as I go on.) Also the dining room balcony hung over the garden so that you could do the "Friends, Romans and countrymen" to the howling mob.

Almost better than the garden proper was the back garden. This contained the dust hole, the coal heap, and, best of all, a real wooden hut. The coal heap was enormous because the Pater used to think it clever to order hundreds of tons at a time. Consequently

it made a superb gold and silver mine, and the hut was all right for the ranchers, cowboys and lumbermen.

But the best part of the back garden was that whenever it rained it got swamped. Then we put boards over it and played Lars Porsena of Clusium, which the Pater made us all learn by heart. (Madeline once said "Lars Porsena of Clapham" and the Pater fairly howled with laughter.) If you don't know the poem, it's the one about Horatius, who kept the bridge and killed the Tarquins as they tried to skip past him. Lionel was always Horatius and the small kids were the Tarquins, and all got their clothes soaked after being stabbed by Lionel, so that we were usually dragged into tea dripping.

The Pater was a lawyer, and absolutely crazy about it. He got up early and studied, and he studied when he came home in the evening and all Sundays and bank holidays. As a result he was always asking for the evidence and giving verdicts till we wished he'd been anything else. Consequently, whenever we had a row and he was at home, he'd drag us all upstairs to his study and try the case, writing down everything we said till we were too tired to stand and would much rather be swiped all round. When we were all dead tired he'd stop the case and make us kiss, when we'd much rather have been thrashed. It's bad enough to have to



kiss your sister, or any girl for the matter of that, but a brother—pah!

There never was anybody with such a mania for writing things down as our Pater. When he wished to make anyone utterly mad he would get out a book and read from it things that one had said at the age of two or three, giving all the kids a chance to giggle.

You can imagine how rotten it was after Sunday dinner to hear this sort of thing read out as specimens of your conversation:

"The gee-gee's tail did grow. The wind did blow the gee-gee's tail."

The Pater used to laugh, too, but you couldn't do anything to him except glare. You can bet that when he was a kid he said things that were just as idiotic.

The inside of the house, which, I ought to tell you, stood at the corner of a London square, was all right in parts. There was a fine spiral staircase running the full height of three floors. With camphorated oil on your hands you could go down the balustrade in no time and come a fine ringing crash on a sort of springboard that supported a mat in front of the dining room door.

The dining room had a huge frosted window in the wall that we were never able to break though we often played cricket opposite to it in the garden. This room was pretty full of books, though the best of them were always locked up in case we should read them instead of doing our lessons. The names of them were: "The Little Duke," "Beechnut," "Hell Revealed to Christians," "The Boy Hunters" and "Misunderstood." Lionel and I didn't like this last one, but we had to pretend we did. The Hell book was fine because of the pictures of people being tortured, roasted, fried and prodded.

While I'm talking about the books, I ought to tell you that we used to steal them sometimes and sell them to get money to go to the Oval or hire a bicycle or buy the "close of play" edition of the *Star*. That is, Lionel and I used to. Most of the others were perfectly honest. Well, one day we took a book to sell at a shop where the man did not know

us. He guessed we had stolen it from home (Chateaubriand's "Genius of Christianity") and insisted on marching home with us. He was a fat, hot-looking brute, in his shirt sleeves. He asked to see the Mater. Lionel and I stood outside in the hall with Madeline and Angela while the brute was telling his tale. We pulled the girls' hair and made them kneel down and pray that we wouldn't be thrashed. I suppose we felt it was no good *our* praying. They prayed like mad, but we got thrashed.

Downstairs from the hall, in the basement, there were some splendid rooms. The best was called a wine cupboard, but we never had any wine in it. You could easily seat thirty or forty people there—and it was perfect for our Black Art Exhibition. It had no windows, and you only had to shut the door to be in absolute darkness. Then Lionel and I would damp our faces and rub them with phosphorus matches and dance the Dance of Death while Hugh or someone beat a tom-tom. The kids didn't like it, but, after all, we got the hidings for it, not they.

Another wonderful room was the bread cupboard, about the size of an ordinary kitchen. Here the Pater kept his chemicals which he bought when he was a medical student. I think he forgot that he had them because he never spoke about them. We soon got to know the right bottles to mix for explosions and bad smells, and I expect there are lots of unexploded mines in the garden now unless the next tenant found them when he was digging.

Perhaps the best part of the kitchen was the steep staircase that connected it with the hall. There was a door in the hall at the top of the staircase, and visitors who opened it under the impression that it led into the street sometimes fell down the staircase into the kitchen. If we were having a meal at the time it was the best joke of the day. Nobody was ever killed.

We had mice but no rats, though Lionel once had a tame white one which got lost. You can't get very much fun out of mice, and the girls cry if you



drown them in a pail. The best fun was to throw them over the wall to the ducks the neighbors kept. That reminds me. Next door there was an old woman servant who was very nearly blind. She used to hang her washing on a line just outside the back door. When she had propped up all the clothes, Lionel used to get on the wall with the big watering pot and pour it over her head. Then she'd say "Bless my soul, it's raining," and take all her clothes in again. The second time Lionel did it, she would say "Drat," but she never found us out. It was awfully funny to see her come out and turn her face up to the sky for Lionel to turn the shower on her.

The basement was full of passages with very few windows. In fact, the only window worth counting was in the scullery. If the garden door was left open, very often a stray cat would get in. The game then was, after shutting the door, to chase it till it dashed through the scullery window. We always used to enjoy making cats break the windows because if we did it ourselves we had to withdraw a shilling from the Post Office Savings Bank. Sometimes the cat didn't jump through the glass but went up the scullery chimney and had to be smoked out.

The first and second floors were not very interesting. The top floor was the best. It had a narrow stone gallery running round it. If you slept on the top floor, as Lionel and I did, you could get out of the window at midnight in your nightgown and crawl round the outside of the house and make noises like ghosts outside the servants' windows.

But perhaps the most perfect thing about the house, apart from the garden, was the tank on the leads, outside the second floor landing window. In the center of the leads was a big hatch, easily moved, which covered the enormous tank. On warm summer mornings, Lionel and I would come down at about four o'clock and have a bath. We had to nip back to bed pretty quick though, as the Pater always got up at six winter and summer.

When we got a chance, too, we used to

fish in the tank. There were no fish in it when we first came to the house, but anything we caught afterward and brought home alive we put in the tank. Also we used to buy the little live fish they sell for bait for pike and pop them in. There must be some big ones in there now. Once we put in a little eel, but only once, and I'll tell you why.

The Pater was pottering about turning on the tap to wash himself one day when out popped an eel into the basin. At first he nearly had a fit, but presently he fished it out, tied it up in a towel and brought it down to the Mater. The Mater put it into a glass bowl full of water and we were all allowed to look at it. Well, I'll swear I'd seen it before, but Lionel said it could never have got out of the tank.

The next night the Pater had some of his friends to dinner, and as they were all fishermen, or thought they were, he trotted out the bowl with the eel in it, and you ought to have heard all the old mugs gasp. What does the Pater do but get down a map all covered with little blue lines and explain to them that this eel must have come all the way from the reservoir at Chingford or somewhere. He traced the eel's journey with his finger through miles and miles of pipes with his friends' eyes getting bigger every minute. For utter blithering idiots you can't beat your father's friends anywhere. They swallowed it like lambs, and one of them said the Pater ought to write to a paper about it.

There were always great feuds between the girls and the boys, and the wars used to be pretty serious at times.

As soon as the war was declared the girls used to fly and entrench themselves, generally taking a prisoner at the start. For instance, Agatha would grab Bernard, and along with Madeline, Angela and Dorothy fly to the girls' room on the second floor and lock and bolt the door.

Then Lionel, Hugh, Eric and I would commence an assault on the fortress. The girls would taunt us through the keyhole. At first we would merely bang at the door. Then more cunning



methods were tried. Pepper was squirted through the keyhole and nasty-smelling chemicals pushed under the door. If this had no effect we would attack the lock with a screwdriver, hammer or pincers and think nothing of smashing it to pieces.

We generally managed to get at the enemy after two or three hours' siege, but usually they surrendered when they found we were getting the better of the lock. We then contented ourselves with screwing their arms till they apologized, administering a smart lesson to the baby and taking any trophies the girls had in their boxes—not that girls have anything worth taking once in a blue moon.

Sometimes the girls got the best of it. Agatha was the eldest of us all, and she could catch you a pretty good swipe. Generally when she got one in, she'd fly to the servants and they'd protect her. Then Madeline would get level with you by sneaking up to your room and tearing a page out of a book you got at Christmas and were awfully fond of. You wouldn't find that out for weeks.

We were all very tall children except me. I think I was short because they made me sleep for a long time in a cot that was too short for me. I can remember my feet sticking out at the end and getting cold in the night. Agatha was dark. She liked reading but I think she was fairly fond of fights, too. She could play cricket a bit, but she would giggle, and Lionel used to get savage about that.

Lionel was very fair and long and lean. He used to get fiery red for almost nothing. He used to read a lot, too, and, like me, he was absolutely mad about cricket. There wasn't a thing worth knowing about it that we did not know. We used actually to calculate all the leading players' batting and bowling averages up to date each evening and hang them on the wall of our bedroom. Moreover, in regard to Surrey, we could tell you offhand every single item of its history, the number of centuries and fifties made in any season by any one player, the number of catches by any one fielder, the number of occasions on which the side scored four hundred or more.

I, Stanley, was the third of the tribe. I was short and squat and ready to do anything that Lionel dared. I delighted in getting up elaborate entertainments for the kids, arranging lotteries and any game that wanted a lot of organization. I think the kids found me the best entertainer.

Madeline had red hair, afterward called auburn, and she had perhaps the worst temper of us all. Angela was very fair, indeed, and very pretty, even in her brothers' eyes, which means a great deal. She very rarely was in fights or got into trouble because she was fearfully good. Hugh was dark like Agatha. He was very cautious, even sly. He was immensely fond of fights. Eric, like Madeline, was red-haired. He was utterly reckless, like Lionel. No fight was too fierce for him.

Bernard was a delicate boy and good, rarely in trouble. There was a great shock to the whole tribe, therefore, when one day while we were staying in Herm, one of the Channel Islands, he was given a bunch of grapes to carry down the road to a little sick girl and ate the lot on the way. Ursula was another red-haired girl. She earned money for some of us as quite a baby in the following way: Sometimes the elder ones were allowed to go for a short walk without the nurse in charge of the perambulator containing the baby. The game then was to stop outside a small sweet shop and, as soon as a benevolent old gentleman or lady came along, tip the perambulator over. The baby was then given a penny to buy sweets by the benevolent one and we were all happy. Sometimes Ursula had to be pitched out three or four times, but generally once did the trick.

Gaston was the last of us, and so young in comparison with the eldest that he was hardly in the tribe. He was instantaneously nicknamed "Smith" as a protest against his absurd foreign Christian name.

You can get kids to do almost anything for a halfpenny.

Once I thought it would be a good thing if the grass could be made to grow again on some parts of the garden where



we had trodden it out. The Mater thought so, too, and gave me a shilling to buy a pound of grass seed. I got it for ninepence, which showed three pence profit. I bought a pint of draught ginger beer for a penny, a pennyworth of ice cream and a "ha'porth" of sweets, so that I only had a halfpenny left when I got home.

I told the Mater that there was no change, and she gave me one look and told me to dig up the garden and plant the seed.

It was a hot day, and after what I had eaten and drunk I felt I couldn't do it. So I called the kids together and told them I'd thought of a new game. The winner was to have a halfpenny. They laughed a good bit, especially Hugh, who never believed that anybody told the truth, but when I showed them the halfpenny they got more civil. They reckoned I must mean it or I would have spent it while I was out.

The game, I told them, was Hidden Treasure. I was going to bury the halfpenny and the one who found it could keep it. The kids liked the idea awfully because, though we had often dug for hidden treasure all over the garden after reading about it in books, it was a different thing to hunt for treasure when you knew it was there.

I showed them the part of the garden where the halfpenny would be buried and then shut them all up in the wash-house. I could hear them fighting like mad as to who was to have the spade, who was to have the rake and so on. When everything was ready I let them out. They all had something to dig with; the smallest kid only had the toasting fork.

Well, they dug and dug for hours. I reckoned they'd done more than I could do in three times the time and it would be as easy as anything to rake in the grass seed. I thought that I ought to get twopence from the Mater for it. They tried to stop now and then because they couldn't find the halfpenny. But I told them that a halfpenny was very small and much the same color as the earth and they were bound to find it if they kept on.

The boys stopped looking for it first, and I jeered at them. Hugh flew in a rage and kicked my leg, so I smacked his face for him, principally for calling me a liar. Then Angela, who was still digging, started to scream like mad.

"I've got it, Stanley!" she shouted. "I've got two. Yours and another one." And sure enough she rushed up with two halfpennies in her hand.

You could have knocked me down with a feather! If she'd only found one I would have been pretty well flummoxed, because I'd changed my mind at the last minute about burying the halfpenny and kept it for the "close of play" edition of the *News*. But two was an absolute knockout!

"I must have dropped the other by accident," I said, and I snatched them from her.

"All right," she said, "but give me my one anyway."

I had a good look at them first. They were very dirty and it was hard to see what they were. But, funniest of all, one was bigger than the other! Neither of them was big enough to be a penny and yet one was bigger than the other!

"Look here," I said—and I'm sure they could all see I was mad with excitement—"I don't believe these are halfpennies. I'm going to wash them."

We all went into the scullery. I scrubbed the bigger one very carefully, but only found some very faint marks which I couldn't make out. But when I'd scrubbed the second one I gave a wild shriek. There was a trireme on it—an old Greek ship with oars sticking out on each side! Therefore, it was a Greek coin and a great curiosity, worth perhaps hundreds of pounds.

When I told the kids this they nearly went mad with excitement, and all of them started to dig their hardest to find more. They were quite right, of course, because usually if you find one coin you find a lot more. At any rate, it is always that way in books. It is the first coin you find that puts you on the scent of the bulk of the treasure. Or, if you don't find more coins you find urns and papyrus, rusty bracelets and lovely



terra cotta jars with two handles sometimes stuffed with precious gems.

Angela howled to have the coins back, but I told her she might lose them, and they were mine, because she was my paid servant while digging, and I'd give her a real halfpenny and my glass water squirt for them. She took the halfpenny and the squirt.

The kids dug a frightful hole not only that day but every day, until the Pater heard of it and had the holes filled up.

In the meantime I had found out all about the coins, and I think that was the best part of the fun. Well, on the other side of the coin was a head, just the sort of head you see on the coins in the "Student's Greece." Round the head were letters. Here they are:

#### IMP CALLECTUS PFAUG.

This knocked me a lot because they were not Greek letters. (I was then up to the second declension, so I knew that all right.) They couldn't be anything but Latin, and I had got far enough at that to know that "IMP." stands for "*Imperator*," an emperor. Callectus or C. Allectus was evidently his name. Who then was the Emperor Callectus or Allectus?

First of all, I searched the "Student's Rome." But he wasn't in this. Next I went through the index of nearly every book of history in the house. At last I tried Lingard's "History of England." It was in thirteen volumes and didn't seem to have an index. But I hit on it at last at the end of the thirteenth volume, and there, sure enough, appeared the name, "Allectus."

And who do you think he was? I'll bet that hundreds of grown-ups don't know. I don't believe even the Pater knew, though when I told him he said, "Emperor Allectus, of course, of course." (Rats!)

He was—an emperor in England. How long ago? Guess! Sixteen hundred and seventeen years ago! And he was a murderer! And he was killed himself. And I found a coin of his reign in our back garden. Doesn't that beat Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn?

I took the coins to the British Museum

and showed them to an old chap with spectacles and a gray beard. He said the small one was the third or small brass, perfectly genuine, of Allectus, and the large one probably a second or middle brass of the same period. But the large one had no value, as the marks were all worn away. He showed me several other coins of the reign in one of the cases, which made me sick, because I thought mine would be the only one in the world. Then he said my small coin was "of a high degree of rarity" and was worth a sovereign!

That was the last sickener. And I was going to buy a farm at the seaside!

"Tuppence the Most" was a thin, hairy, rather dirty old man, probably a Jew. Once we despised him, and I'm sure he hated us. But in the end we became fast friends.

He kept a sort of old curiosity shop in the main street not far from our house. He had a notice in his window saying that he was prepared to buy almost everything, and this soon caught the attention of Lionel and myself. If he had money to give away like that we were prepared to help in every possible way.

We started by taking him some books. The Pater had such an enormous number, mostly trash about science and philosophy and so on, that he could hardly miss what we took. (I have already told you about our selling one book, but that was at another shop, to which you can bet we never went again.) The old chap had really no business to buy them from us. He must have been a bit of a rascal to shut his eyes to the fact that these great and very learned volumes could not belong to children. But still he was very useful to us, and I'm sure we don't bear any grudge.

We used to take it in turns to sell the book. One would go into the shop with the volume tucked under his coat, and pretty scared always, no matter how often he had done it, while the others waited round the corner. Then presently the one who'd sold it came out and joined the others. "How much?" would be the shout. "Twopence" was always



the answer, and then all of us would roar with laughter and set to discussing how to spend the money.

The invariable price, twopence, was a great joke amongst us. The old dealer in the shop would take the book held out to him and inquire: "How much do you want?" "A shilling" or "Sixpence" we would sometimes venture to suggest. He would shake his head and look reprovingly over his dirty spectacles. And then would come his invariable offer: "Tuppence the most."

I have never known him to offer more or, indeed, less. He had only one price—at any rate with our tribe. So, not knowing his real name, we christened him "Tuppence the Most." He got to know the name we had given him eventually, and he cackled with laughter and showed the most ghastly teeth.

When inquiries began to be made for missing books, Lionel and I looked out for fresh loot. There was plenty about in such a big house, and piles of stuff that was no good to anyone at home, in our opinion. Particularly was this true of the spare room, which was piled high with lumber and all sorts of rum odds and ends. This room was always locked, but you could get into it by crawling round the outside of the house and forcing the window catch.

Once inside, it was a perfect heaven. There were trunks there stuffed with relics that you could never explore in a lifetime. There was a lot of old and broken furniture, some broken clocks, with fine wheels and springs in them, piles of old magazines and newspapers—yes, and a lot of letters. From one of these Lionel and I found out that the Pater when he was a little boy lived in a house at Harper's Ferry when Stonewall Jackson blew up the arsenal, and he and his father and mother and sisters had to hide in the woods in their nightgowns till after the explosion. The Pater had never said anything about this, so you can bet we thought a great deal more of him after finding that out. He didn't look in the least as if anything like that had happened to him. (Of course the Pater wasn't an American,

but his father happened to be living in America at the time.)

There was a bundle of letters that we often read, all written by the Pater's father to him when he was at school. We used fairly to burst ourselves over them. This is the sort of thing:

We are going to the exhibition tomorrow where your mamma has not yet been. It is to be kept open till the end of October, I believe, and there is some talk of having it lit up by gas. If the last proposal is adopted it is expected that vast numbers will visit the great collection in the evenings.

Holy crikey!

Here's another bit:

You say you did not receive the number of "Pickwick Papers" I sent you. I expect your superiors think, and no doubt rightly, that it is objectionable reading.

One of our greatest discoveries in the spare room was a huge writing desk. It had some funny things in it, but nothing we could sell. Best of all, it had a secret drawer. There was nothing in the secret drawer though, which proves what rot you find in books, but it was great fun finding out how it worked. When Lionel and I were saving up for a bicycle we put all our money in the secret drawer. We had three shillings and eightpence in there in no time, and then it was stolen. I don't remember whether Lionel or I stole it.

Well, by degrees old Tuppence the Most got most of the things in that spare room. Nobody ever went in it but us, so they were never missed.

I told you that the old chap didn't like us at first. It was probably because we used to make fun of him. Lionel and I would go in and pretend to buy a horse pistol. We would make poor old Tuppence the Most show us all the pistols in the shop and how they worked and then we'd walk out saying none of them would do. Of course we had no money really, and I think he guessed that after a few times. Also I think he suspected us, most unjustly, of taking things from his stall outside. This was the sort of thing that for some funny reason we could not descend to, though I believe Eric once sneaked a screwdriver while he was in the shop and



solemnly sold it back to the old dealer on the spot for twopence.

Why old Tuppence the Most changed his attitude toward us I don't know, but he suddenly became very kind and a regular benefactor. I dare say now it was the spare room that did it. Probably something we sold him for twopence turned out to be worth a lot of money.

For instance, he let Eric hire a superb wooden pistol that went off if you bunged it full of gunpowder and put a lighted match quickly down the barrel, for a penny. Eric never took the pistol back and Tuppence the Most never asked for it. Then Hugh bought a Zulu assagai. It was a penny a week till eighteenpence was paid off. Hugh paid the first week and got the assagai and then he never seemed to get any more money. Being honest, he told Tuppence the Most about it, and then the old chap said he could keep the assagai until he was able to pay, which was as good as a present.

We lost the assagai, though. Lionel used to throw it at the ducks next door, and one day he spiked a duck, which kicked up such a row that the people came out and sneaked the assagai. We all got thrashed.

But best of all about Tuppence the Most, he had bicycles for hire. None of us could ride, but you can have any amount of fun trying, even if you fall off all the time, for sixpence an hour. We always had to pay the sixpence, though. He never gave his bicycles away. Well, as a rule, we used to club together, six of us, and have ten minutes each by the clock on the church in the middle of the square. The bicycle always got smashed a bit. If it was very bad we used to send Angela back with it, because she was the prettiest and looked good, so that Tuppence the Most couldn't swear at her.

Nearly all the money Lionel and I got from the old dealer was spent at the Oval. If we could sell enough things to get sixpence each we were in heaven. I remember, when Surrey played Lancashire once, it cost the Pater Macaulay's "Essays" in six volumes and all his Baedekers. We would walk all the way to the Oval, go in when the gates opened and stop till the last ball was bowled. Sometimes we would have nothing to eat all day because we didn't dare tell where we were going for fear the Mater would ask where the money came from. Good old Tuppence the Most. He *was* a brick.

*(Further adventures of these interesting children will follow next month.)*



## SPRING NIGHT

By Sara Teasdale

IN Central Park the lovers sit;  
On every hilly path they stroll.  
Each thinks his love is infinite  
And crowns his soul.

But we are cynical and wise—  
We walk a careful foot apart;  
You make a little joke that tries  
To hide your heart.

Give over, we have laughed enough;  
Oh, dearest and most foolish friend,  
Why do you wage a war on Love  
To lose the battle in the end?



# THE PATH OF THE MOTH

By Herman Scheffauer

Suppose you were a burglar, and business had been dull. Then suppose a magnificent jeweled scarfpin suddenly floated in at the window and fell at your feet. When the police found the pin on you, and the judge asked you where you got it, you'd naturally tell him just how it happened, of course. And you'd be surprised and hurt if he refused to believe it. Well, if you had been the judge in this story, would you have believed it?

RETURNING from their weekend in the country, the young doctor and his wife entered the cool, darkened hallway of their flat. The glow of the summer sun, the strong tang of the woods and fields hung about them. They were hungry and warm and conscious of their dusty feet upon the thick new carpets.

They went into their sitting room. The wife let the shade run purring upon the roller and flung up the window. The outer world shimmered in, hazy blue—a panorama of roofs, streets, chimneys, with the river beyond and the bridges still basking in the sun. The murmur of the city invaded the room.

"I wonder whether my beauty has blossomed yet?" said the doctor, and took down a wooden cigar box from the sideboard.

His wife, who had not heard, went out, carrying a great armful of wild flowers. There was a sound of splashing water from the kitchen. Very carefully the doctor opened the wooden box and peered into the darkness within. He gently inserted his long white fingers. There was a soft flutter, a swift, startled movement of the man's hand, a flash of pure, palpitating color. A huge and beautiful tropic moth stood quivering between his fingers, adroitly held by the body. The box fell to the floor.

The giant South American moth had broad wings of lemon yellow flecked

with bars of coppery hue and ringed with eyes of purple and emerald like a peacock's tail. The doctor's eyes devoured its splendor hungrily. He had imported the chrysalis from Brazil. It would be the most beautiful specimen in his collection. The magnificent insect struggled with all its six feet; he felt the renewed life quiver and protest in its fragile wings.

The insect would have to be killed before it beat its beauty to pieces; with every quiver a shadow seemed to run across the bright vibrating wings. He usually killed his moths and butterflies with chloroform. He reached for the little bottle on the sideboard. It was empty.

There was a scream. His wife was shrieking his name.

"Oh! Oh!" she cried from the bedroom. "Quick! Quick! Come here!"

"All right, dear, all right—in a moment," he shouted back, in agitation.

He looked hurriedly about him—then swiftly drew the slender pin from his tie—a diamond sparkling with a lambent fire. This would do for the moment. He hurriedly transfixed the moth and pinned it to the mahogany table, then ran to his wife. He found her standing in the midst of emptied and overturned drawers from the dressing table, in a chaos of scattered fripperies, toilet articles and bric-a-brac.

"Burglars!" she gasped. "Burglars!"



The doctor leaped to the dressing table.

"What have they taken?" he cried.

"All our silver brushes—and my watch—and my spare jewelry," she answered. "How fortunate I put on my rings and brooches—all *you* gave me!"

"That's good, dear."

"Yes, and it's lucky you wore your diamond pin—the one *I* gave you. I'm glad they didn't get *that*."

The moth in the sitting room remained still for a moment. A shiver ran through it. Its radiant wings shook like tiny sails; the glittering gem of the scarfpin flashed and changed color with the fluctuating hues. The tiny feet of the insect wriggled and slipped upon the polished mahogany. The long convulsive body strained and strove. Then the pin gave way—the point had barely entered the hard wood. The moth began crawling across the table. Then it spread its wings and flew vigorously about the room, a glory of gold and fire, the pin like a star between its wings. A sudden swoop and it was out of the room, a shadow of a moment against the hot, pale blue skies. Then it vanished in the depths.

After a while the doctor and his wife entered the room to look at the moth.

"Good Lord!" cried the man, leaping toward the table. "He's gone!"

"Gone!" echoed the wife. "Where did you put him?"

"Here! Here! I had him out of the box—when you called me. Hadn't any of my mounting pins handy—so I stuck him down with my scarfpin. Look, here, here—you can see the mark! He must have got loose, flown away"—he rushed over to the window and leaned over the sill—"out of the window. Not a sign of him!"

He came back disconsolate.

"I'd rather have lost anything than that moth. I've wanted one of that species ever since I was a boy. What rotten luck! Gone! And I thought I had him nailed to the table with that pin!"

He stared despairingly out of the window. The young wife gazed at him with her large eyes; her lips trembled; she

sat down and burst into tears. Her husband patted her shoulder.

"There, there, don't cry. It wasn't your fault. You didn't know I had the devil loose when you called. I thought I'd killed him at once. I'll write De Santos for another. Now, please don't cry, dear."

The only answer to this was a deeper sob from the wife. Her head sank lower into her hands. The doctor stared, perplexed, angry, full of regret for the loss of the insect. He did not know that it was not for the wretched insect that his wife wept. It was enough for her that he had not uttered a word of regret over the loss of the beautiful diamond scarfpin, the pin she had given him as an engagement gift.

The window from which the moth had flown was on the sixth floor of the new apartment house, a harsh and brittle hulk of flesh-colored brick and sharp, tooled stone which lifted itself insolently above acres of old and dingy houses. The creature fluttered erratically down its sunlit walls. The forces of life were fighting in its body; a strange searing pain burned in its vitals. Two of its legs hung immovable as if paralyzed. Two floors below there was an open window. A strong current of air and the instinct for darkness urged it into the cool room.

Inside, directly beneath the window, there was a large desk. An old man, a university professor, sat here surrounded by books. He was writing on sheets of paper spread before him. The old professor had white hair that hung low upon his forehead, and a white beard—the hand that held the pen was pale, blue-veined, almost transparent. Silver-rimmed spectacles glittered upon his nose. The pen moved, the ink flowed—these words glistened wet and black:

It has been proved beyond a doubt not only by the comparatively recent researches of such distinguished archaeologists as Derebbo, Graficke, Merle and Hoosgens—but also by the many authentic sepulchral monuments which have come down to us from antiquity, that the ancients were wont to regard the butterfly or the larger moths as the symbol of the soul—as the psyche. (Lessing, in his "Laokoön.")



The old man paused and half closed his eyes. The heat was oppressive; his brain felt faint and dizzy. There was a gleam of yellow light and the next instant a huge moth settled down upon the cover of a large black book. The insect stood still, slowly moving its wings. Something flashed and glittered sharply above its back, a tiny spot of brilliance. The old man stared; his pale blue, short-sighted eyes widened; his jaw dropped. He half rose to his feet; his thin legs trembled under him.

"Daughter!" he croaked. "Daughter, for the love of—"

There was no reply. He turned toward the door, softly, stealthily, to call his daughter. He turned his head to stare at the flaming apparition. But it was gone. He stood still, passed his hand over his eyes, murmured to himself. He sat down again at his desk, shook his head, took up his pen, and wrote:

It was also current in the folklore of the peoples of Northern Europe that a certain rare species of the golden moth was a herald of death. It was said that a strange light or nimbus accompanied the creature entrusted with this solemn portent.

The old man paused for a moment; a cloud passed over his brow and he stared into the apple-blue immensity beyond his window. Then, struggling between scientific exactness and human distress, he set down his own learned conviction, now nearly five minutes old:

The visit of the moth was, however, of no significance unless it entered the house at sundown.

The great moth, circling erratically, now settled upon the upper rail of an open window in the begrimed brick wall of the house opposite. The room was a bedroom. In the bed lay a wasted child staring out at the blue slit of sky visible along the coping of the big apartment house. It had lain there for many days, for many weeks, staring at that blue rift of the heavens, watched it fade and darken into gray, into indigo. At night the stars traveled past it—big stars and little ones. And sometimes one fell and gashed the cold dark blue with a streak of flame. But here was a

new miracle, come in broad day—something that blazed brighter than any star. He had never seen a butterfly—nothing but the pale and dusty little moths that flew about at night and singed themselves at the lamp. Butterflies were not bred by the brick and stone of the city. He held out his hands to it. A sigh of pleasure and excitement came from his lips. He had lived for four years and this was his first miracle. The thing flickered into the darkness of the room, which was full of the reek of carbolic acid and sickly medicines. The child's great dark eyes, burning in the gray, puttylike little face, followed the streak of glory about the room. At last it lighted on the rumpled blankets at the foot of the bed, precisely upon the towering, snow-covered Alpine peaks which a common, ordinary eye would have seen only as the white coverlet heaped up over the child's left knee. He dared scarcely breathe—his bloodless lips made a perfect O. But his shriveled little body inclined slowly toward that bit of winged flame, that scintillant star. His little lean hands with their colorless fingers and concave fingernails, crept slowly, cunningly across the coverlet—like two bleached spiders. He longed to touch that splendor; it attracted him like a flame, like a flower. The trembling star cast a spell upon him by its flashing. It darted forth colored rays. He wondered whether it, too, was alive.

His right hand was now within a foot of the miracle. Suddenly it veered away, blazed through the room and struck itself against the wall, where it flickered up and down for some moments. Then it shot over toward the window and dashed itself against the pane. There was a slight thud. The moth hung against one of the sash bars as if exhausted. Then it spread its wings of amber and gold and sailed out into the open air. The sick child saw it vanish upward—into the skies. A long wailing sigh escaped him. His mother came into the room.

She was a tall woman of thirty in a shabby dress. Her face was very pale and her black hair was bleaching into



gray. Her little son was lying on his back, his fingers still outstretched as if to seize something, his starry, brilliant eyes full of the reflected light from the oblong of blue sky. There was a yearning in these eyes and a look upon his face which terrified his mother.

"Darling, what's the matter?" she cried, kneeling beside the bed.

"I dess it was an angel," said the child. "He jes' come flying in at the window—oh, muvver, he had goldy wings and somefink that shined!"

"An angel!" cried the mother.

A tragic look crept into the pallid mask of her face. She seized her child's hands, burst into tears and buried her head in the bedclothes. The shadows of old superstitions rioted in her soul. The child was very much astonished. Why should his mother weep because an angel had flown in? Or was it, perhaps, a fairy?

The moth, with the jeweled pin still gleaming aslant between its wings, now fluttered toward the rear of the great building, where there was a row of backyards belonging to cheap, miserable tenements. For a moment it poised itself on a clothesline that ran from a dirty kitchen window to a weather-beaten pole, hung with ends of frayed, half-rotting rope. The pole leaned aslant above the backyards, which sent up a foul incense to the evening skies.

On the second floor of one of these houses there was a pot of red geraniums and a rusty bush of half-withered marguerites. On the sill there was a milk bottle and an old wooden soapbox which served as a cupboard. From this window for some sixteen, often eighteen hours a day, there came a low reverberation, a humming and purring. This proceeded from a sewing machine driven by a gaunt-faced woman, who made a scant living by slaving as a seamstress. When the weather was fine, one beheld her at the open window, behind the machine, her plain, furrowed face, with its heavy jaws and its dingy hair, drawn tightly back from her forehead, bent above a river of white cotton or linen which was always streaming across the

machine from left to right or from front to back. But today the machine was silent. The woman slept, her head with its wisps of mouse-colored hair and its leather cheeks embedded in the folds of the white cotton. The dull heat of the summer afternoon had conquered the sweated seamstress. The yellow moth, flying heavily, now came beating in at the window. It lighted upon the crumpled white cotton, where it pirouetted about for some time on its thin legs, its wings quivering.

It approached close to the gnarled hand with its enlarged knuckles and cordlike veins. The sun, striking its wings, reflected a golden glow over the hand. The fine, clear diamond shot forth sparkles from its facets that flickered in iridescent spots over the worn face and the discolored ceiling. Then it settled upon the twisted strands of the brittle, iron-gray hair of the woman. Its wings were now almost motionless; only the antennæ moved slowly, and a faint shudder went through the body of the insect. It resembled some splendid masterpiece of the jeweler's and enameler's art, set, as if in mockery, above the dead, lustreless hair, a symbol of defeated love stricken to death, of perishable beauty dying in isolation, like a forgotten memory of joy—or some incarnation of the withered spinster's dreams. It was dying now, the golden pin thrust through its vitals. Its antennæ moved very slowly; its feet trembled beneath the weight of its body—the wings underwent an almost invisible palpitation, an alternate paling and darkening of the pure and radiant hues.

The sleeping seamstress moved slightly; her lips opened, disclosing her crooked, yellow teeth. A sigh that was partly a snore came from her lips. Slowly, stupidly, she raised her head and rubbed her eyes. Something yellow flashed for a moment in the sunlight, but failed to catch her eye. Yawning, she gathered up the folds of cotton, holding them with both hands under the beak of the sewing machine. Her knees moved up and down; the machine purred; in a few moments it was racing



as thunderously as ever. She was once again earning her three cents an hour. And she had no thought of her glorious visitor that had come to die upon her hair and to enrich her with a miraculous gift.

The great butterfly floundered down past the first story window and fell into an area. This was filled with waste paper, bits of orange peel, a few old beer bottles, torn cigarette packets, an old boot and discolored rags, all covered with the drab dust and pitted with the rain. One of the basement windows opened into the area. The moth slowly made its way over the chaos of waste and rubbish. It fluttered aimlessly up and down the dusty, cobwebbed panes. One of these was broken. The insect, making one last blind, instinctive effort, fluttered into the room.

It was a mere den, hideous and almost bare. A rough deal table stood near the middle of the room, with a few soiled plates, beer bottles and a glass lamp with a broken and blackened chimney. In one corner there was an iron bed with dirty, rumpled sheets; to the right a rusty stove with some foul pots and pans. The floor was thick with dust, lint, burnt matches and cigarette ends.

A young man with a pug nose, reddish hair, a heavy, unshaven chin and a lurid scar across his right cheek sat at the table. His coat was open; the low soft collar of the gray flannel shirt framed a short, thick neck. The hands were red and hairy. He was pouring out the last foaming glassful of beer from one of the bottles.

The glorious fly fluttered upon the dirty table. It found a drop of liquid and began sucking it up with its proboscis. The man paused, the beer bottle raised in air; his little eyes fixed themselves in a blank stare upon the dying insect, upon the clear gem that scintillated like a spark of fire in the turbid light of the basement room. Slowly he bent forward; his red arm stole out; the stubby fingers with their grimy nails spread open—prehensile, prepared half to smite and half to clutch. The butterfly was absolutely motionless. Then

for a moment some impulse of life flickered through its tiny, tortured body. It launched itself into the air once more and flickered up and down the wall, its legs vibrating, its wings strumming. The man struck sidewise, with flat open palm. A thin golden dust like the pollen from a flower drifted down the dingy walls. The insect, with broken, crumpled wings, fell crushed upon the table, and the head of the pin clinked against the side of a beer bottle. The man stooped eagerly over his kill and picked up the lifeless thing. His hard, clumsy fingers closed over the diamond pin; the dead butterfly fell to the floor. Its slayer held the pin up to the light; his little eyes glistened; he chuckled gutturally in half-drunken tones.

The battered door behind him opened. A tall man with white, close-cropped hair, a stubby black mustache and thick bushy eyebrows appeared. Swift as light, he saw the sparkle of the gem and the futile suspicious movement of the other as he slipped the pin into his pocket.

"Hello! What hev yer got there?" he asked.

"Nuthin'," replied the other, scowling.

"Lemme see it," said the older man, holding out a lean right hand, from which the middle finger was missing, and advancing. "Wot did yer put inter that there pocket, eh?"

"Nuthin' at all, I tell yer!" said the younger fellow sullenly.

"Come off! I saw yer tuck away a sparkler!" said the newcomer.

He was peering out of narrowed eyes at his mate. His tone was one of firm assurance, of liberal tolerance and large expectancy.

"There!"

He placed one finger upon the breast pocket in which the diamond pin lay concealed. The other shrank away and clapped his hand over the flap.

"Keep yer fist off!" he cried.

"That's the kind of a game you've bin playin', eh?" asked the older man, transfixing the other with his sharp, black eyes. "Keepin' a part of the swag all to yerself—eh? Tryin' ter do me out o' my share—eh?"



Each question rose in key and intensity and fierceness; with each, the newcomer crept nearer and nearer to the red-haired one.

"S'help me Gawd," said the red-haired man, "I didn't keep nuthin' back! Wasn't yer there yerself at the crib?"

"Where'd yer get that glassy?" snarled the dark-browed man.

"I'll tell yer, if yer wanten know. See that yellin butterfly there?"

He kicked at the insect where it lay with pale broken wings amidst the filth of the floor.

"Well, wot about it?"

"Well, that there bug came a-flyin' in through the windy with the pin stickin' in him—blast my soul if it ain't true!"

The huge hand of the black-eyed man clutched the speaker by the throat.

"Wot yer givin' us?" he shouted hoarsely. "Wot d'yer take me for, eh?"

"Leggo! D'ye hear—leggo o' me!" screamed the young man with the red hair, his body twisting, and thrusting with his hands against that rigid arm.

"Gimme that pin; gimme that pin, or I'll mash yer red nut," yelled the taller man. "Ye dirty pup, tryin' ter do me out er my share of the haul—after I'd put yer onter it, too! Fork it over now, damn yer hide—or I'll take it away from yer. Is that the way ter treat yer partner?"

"I tell yer, the bug came a-flyin' in with it—yer can believe me or not—jest as yer please. The pin's mine, an' I'm a-goin' ter hang on ter it!"

The taller man suddenly seized the other with both hands around the neck, crooked his left leg behind his knees and tried to fling him backward. The red-haired one, gasping, strangling, volleying oaths, his eyes popping from his head, struck out furiously. One of his clenched fists, hard as oak, thudded against the mouth of the black-haired man. The lip was split; a tooth broke loose; the fellow cursed and spat out the tooth in a spray of blood. The men clutched, struggled, struck at each other's faces, their arms enwreathed,

their legs interlocked, their teeth set. The veins rose upon their temples; their faces grew purple; the sweat streamed from their foreheads; there was a sound of tearing cloth and the impact of fists, gruntings, snortings, curses, yells. Their feet scuffled over the floor, slid, stood braced; now one would fling the other free of the floor, but neither fell. The dust rose from the unswept boards. Like a refrain the taller man kept repeating:

"Give it up, damn yer, give it up!"

Now pantingly, now sobbingly, now bursting forth like an explosion, came the constant answer:

"It's mine! It's mine!"

Back and forth they hurtled; the chairs flew to right and left. They went careering against the table, which was overturned; the plates and bottles crashed to the floor. The blood from the tall man's mouth smeared and spattered their faces and hands. Then the writhing and convulsive bodies staggered against the little stove. This was pushed from its place and thundered upon the floor. The smoke pipe was torn from its socket and whirled through the air, showering them with clouds of thick, choking soot. They became two fighting demons, a thrusting, clawing, two-headed beast with four arms and four legs. The red hair vanished—under the rain of soot, the blood became ink. Their faces were those of negroes, and were rent by the flashing white of the rolling eyes, the red slash of the laboring lips. Voices were heard outside, thumpings upon the walls, shouts and oaths. The neighbors were protesting. The two men fell to the floor, rolling, wallowing, among the crockery, the dust and soot. The taller and older man was now beating the blackened head of his partner against the floor.

"Give it up, damn yer, give it up!" he creaked hoarsely, and reached for the torn coat pocket of the prostrate one. He placed one knee on his chest.

"All right! Leggo o' me—leggo! I'll divvy up with yer," cried the defeated redhead, gasping like a fish.

"Yer will, will yer? Why didn't yer



say so before, then—eh? Lemme see the glassy.”

He watched the loose arm of his prostrate antagonist wriggle into the torn pocket. A blank stare of astonishment spread over the coal-black face.

“It’s gone!” he gasped.

“Yer lie!” howled the other furiously, thrusting in his hand. “I’ll find it.”

The door opened from without. Three policemen stood there. Behind them a crowd of excited men and women craned their necks.

The three policemen advanced into the room. One stooped and picked up the diamond pin shining like a star amidst the black foulness of the floor. He twirled it curiously in his fingers.

The two men rose to their feet; the soot showered from their torn and befouled clothes.

“You’ll come along to the station now,” said the first policeman, peering into the blackened faces—“both of you.”

They protested loudly and showed fight.

“Who’s this talking?” said one of the policemen, the youngest of all, a fresh-faced and keen-eyed young fellow. “Seems to me I’ve heard that voice before.”

He stepped close to the tall man and peered into his face.

“He’s the one we’ve been looking for,” he said. “Look at his eyebrows—and the middle finger of his right hand missing—”

“This must be his pal, then,” said the older policeman. “Red-haired, ain’t you, under that soot?” he added, turning to the younger man. “We’ve been looking for you, too. You’re wanted, both of you—for burglary.”

The pair were handcuffed and marched off to the station.

The room was searched, the walls and cupboard probed, the floor torn up. But not a single piece of the property the notorious burglars had stolen from a pawnbroker’s shop and from several private houses and flats could be found. Yet the men were obviously guilty. They were identified by several per-

sons—and by the thumbmarks left on glass and polished wood.

There was no direct evidence but the pin. This was identified by the bald-headed pawnbroker as having been stolen from him. It was one of his finest stones, said he, in a high nasal voice.

“Yer lie!” the red-headed one shouted at this oily witness as he stood in the box. “Yer lie, yer mudface.” The burglar choked and spluttered. His fury made him inarticulate.

“Where did you get the pin, then?” asked the judge, a little later.

“I tell yer, Judge, a big yeller butterfly come flyin’ in at the windy—honest it did—with the pin through his back. My pardner here saw the butterfly—after I’d killed it—a big yeller butterfly it was—bigger’n any I ever see—with the pin a-blazin’ and a-shinin’ like sixty.”

The judge smiled wanly. Jury, counsel and audience burst into laughter.

“An excellent—quite a poetic fancy!” remarked the judge. “A pity that you don’t employ it in literature instead of looting.”

The wheels of justice rumbled on; the rusted cogs groaned and creaked. The jury brought in their verdict—guilty as charged. The lines about the mouth of the judge were as cryptic hieroglyphics in a mask of stone.

“Stand up!” he commanded the prisoners.

The red-haired man and the black-haired man rose.

“Five years penal servitude—” he said, addressing the younger man. Then he shot a glance at the tall black-haired housebreaker. “And you, being his partner, will share his sentence. Five years penal servitude.”

The burglars were taken away. The bald-headed pawnbroker went off with the pin, the reporters with a comic “story.” The judge yawned. The jury, glad to be relieved of one of the glorious duties of citizenship, sped back to its private businesses. And the crushed body of the butterfly lay mouldering amidst the rubbish of the dumping grounds that form the western approach to this glittering capital.



# PERTINENT AND IMPERTINENT

By Owen Hatteras

IF a man pays \$25.00 to a minister in order to get married, afterward paying \$2500.00 to a divorce lawyer for the purpose of getting unmarried—how many times more precious is liberty than matrimony?

## PLAYFUL IDENTITIES:

"Such a Little Queen"—Gaby Deslys.

"Minnie's Luck"—Edward Sheldon.

"The Man Who Dared"—Nat Goodwin.

"If I Were King"—Harry Pilcer.

"Her Own Way"—Eva Tanguay.

"The Man Who Remembered"—David Belasco.

"The Man in the Dark"—Bert Williams.

ALL the world's a stage, and most people merely supers.

"It looks just like its father (or mother)."—This saying is ordinarily used as flattery, but it often has a great deal of truth in it. This the Eugenists should deplore, for, as the meaning of the word "eugenics" is "well born," and its aim is to make each generation an improvement, if the child looks like its proud parent there has been no improvement!

WOMAN's idea of bliss—Bargain counter prices on eggs; a husband who believes in suffrage; election to the presidency of the Drama League.

CLAIRVOYANCE—Ezra Pound interpreting some of his verse.

## AMERICAN ART IDEALS:

Instead of our artists' employing their time and talents on such Old World, decadent themes as "The Coliseum by Moonlight," "The Dying Legionary" and "A Section of Old Bologna," they should occupy themselves more especially with essentially American subjects.

For instance, why bother with the Rhine, the Appian Way and the streets of Cairo, when beyond the Rockies lie Utah and Reno? Why the Vampire when there is available the Umpire? Why Bashi-Bazouks, Salomes, burgo-masters, donkey boys, mandarins, and Madonnas when there are to be had Pullman porters, southpaws, Industrial Workers, hazers, feudists, grafters and pickaninnies? Rather than Jupiter and Io, let us have Jawndee and Ida; instead of Theodorus, give us Theodore.

From Kensington to Dresden and Satsuma, what more inspiring scenic subject than "The Breakfast Food Canyon at Niagara," "The Billboards of Cincinnati," and "A Proposed Fifty-Story National Capitol after Suggestions by Joseph G. Cannon"? Possibilities in portraiture are "A Cabinet Officer," done in whitewash, or "The Forgetful Magnate" in oil.

Other suggestions are offered:

"Sacrifice of Wall Street Lambs."

"Birthplace of Tyrus R. Cobb."

"Trust President in Stripes."

"The Man Higher Up."

"The Joy Riders."

"New York Policeman Getting His."

"American Explorer Discovering the North Pole." (The Pole worked into the background some three hundred miles.)



# THE DESCENT OF GEORGE

By Helen Talbot and Frederic Arnold Kummer

GEORGE did not descend upon us gently, as the rain from heaven, nor yet with the wobbling uncertainty of a vagrant balloon. He came like a bolt from the blue—a gift from the gods—albeit not a gift of the sort to arouse sensations of gratitude. There are gifts and gifts. I once knew a man who was presented with a tame boa constrictor by an admiring friend in the East India trade. It was very affectionate, and insisted upon sleeping with him nights. Another friend of mine was once presented with triplets.

But to return to George. His last name was Papakousnikous. There were also several others in between, but they sounded so much like conundrums that I gave them up. George was an Albanian, and the country of his nativity lies, geographically speaking, somewhere between Constantinople and the Balkan States. Perhaps it is a libel upon an adventurous people to say lies, since, as nearly as I can learn, it is in a continual state of uprising.

One of the numerous Washingtons of Albania—I'm sure he was, for he said so himself—visited this country after the failure of his last weekly blow for freedom, ostensibly to raise funds to prosecute the cause of liberty. He borrowed two hundred and fifty dollars from me, because I was a friend of a man he had once met in Paris, and promptly departed for San Francisco, whence he is said to have eloped to Paris with a fashionable dressmaker. There must have been something in the cut of his uniform which touched a responsive chord in her nature. I saw it once. It was a cross between the costume of a French majordomo and that of a *pre-*

*mière danseuse*. The upper part was majordomo—the lower a sort of stiff white ballet skirt that stuck out all around and gave its wearer the appearance of a male Venus rising from the bath. It has never seemed strange to me that Albania is not free if her patriots go about in things like that. Imagine Washington crossing the Delaware rigged out like the tenor in a Broadway musical comedy!

But to return again to George. I'm glad he has one common or garden name—it makes it easier to come back to him. He came to America, it seems, as an attachment of some sort to the before mentioned Albanian patriot. Whether his position was that of cook, orderly, army or friend I never learned. He occupied all these various positions at one time or another. His greatest trait was his fidelity. It was of a gluelike nature, akin to flypaper. Once he became attached to you, you couldn't get rid of him with a derrick. There are some people like that. Nothing can destroy the vast yearning they feel to serve you. It was that way with George and the patriot. When the latter departed for San Francisco, he managed to give George the slip somewhere between Jersey City and Denver, but the faithful adherent was not to be daunted. He walked all the way to the coast, and appeared in San Francisco just as the elopement to Paris was about to be pulled off. There are times when a companion in arms who insists upon sleeping on a rug across your doorway is a good thing, but not when eloping with a lady of a sensitive disposition. George accompanied the elopers as far as New York, but no farther. What means his



former patron used to discourage him at this point I never learned. I wished later that I had. It would have come in handy.

I on one occasion had the misfortune to befriend George. I did not regard it as a misfortune at the time, but subsequent events caused me to change my mind. I never before realized how acts of kindness may sometimes recoil upon you with the efficiency of the hind end of a mule. I happened to be interested to a small extent in a manufacturing concern in New York, and upon the earnest solicitation of George's compatriot and superior officer got him a position to do something requiring no great effort of the brain—piling lumber I think it was. George, so I was subsequently informed, piled lumber for the space of thirty days, with a dignified and deeply aggrieved air, and then quit, with the remark that he feared it was undermining his health.

For two years thereafter no thought of George or his erstwhile master crossed my mind. Oh, fancied and fatuous security! One June morning, as I was leaving my house in New Jersey for the train, I got a letter. It was from George, and he addressed me as Most High and Noble Lord. I knew something was coming, after that, but I did not know that it was to be George himself. It was, however, and the time set was the following morning, which happened to be Sunday. He informed me in weird and awful English that he had decided to place himself under my protection, and that I was henceforth to be his most honorable and noble patron, whom he intended to serve till death did us part, or words to that effect. He seemed to feel that he was conferring upon me a prodigious favor. I groaned. As a patron I felt sure I was going to prove a dismal failure.

The next morning I took up a strategic position on the front porch and attempted to read a magazine, with one eye on the path leading from the road. Along about eleven o'clock I saw him coming, and in spite of our previous brief acquaintance I knew him at once. He wore a jaunty suit of gray, a dashing

Panama hat with a variegated ribbon around it, and carried a shiny yellow suitcase and a bamboo cane. Altogether he presented so different an appearance from what I had expected that I sat staring at him in amazement. I had pictured a frayed and somewhat shopworn George, marked with the stains of travel, and had already begun to speculate upon the possibility of using him at the business end of a lawn mower, with a cot in the unused storeroom in the barn until I could get him something to do. This well dressed and complacent-looking gentleman, with a Panama hat at least one hundred percent better than my own, would not, I felt, exactly fit the rôle I had mentally assigned to him.

I rose as he ascended the veranda steps. "You are George," I said accusingly, much as I might have said: "You are a suspicious character."

He allowed me no time for further greeting. "Most nople lord," he began, then sank gracefully upon one knee, his hat pressed to his heart. In a moment he had risen, and started in to chant to me, in some outlandish tongue, a sort of pæan of welcome. It sounded like the Greek alphabet to me, and of course I couldn't understand a word of it, so I choked him off by asking him if he wouldn't have a cigar. He accepted with alacrity, made himself comfortable in an armchair, and proceeded for the next twenty minutes to tell me how much I meant to him, how I was his friend in adversity—I saw no signs of any adversity—his protector, his patron, his master. From now on he proposed to be my slave; he would sleep across my doorway (not if I see you first, I said to myself), go with me wherever I went, defend me from my enemies, comfort me in sickness and sorrow—in short, it appeared that from now on life for me was going to be a very different thing indeed.

All this seemed to me like a large order. George doubtless meant well, but I wasn't looking for any slaves. I couldn't help wondering what old Harrison, the senior member of our firm, would say, were I to show up on Mon-



day morning with a six-foot bodyguard trotting at my heels. I also wondered what my wife would say when she learned that George was henceforth to constitute himself a human doormat across our bedroom door. I hadn't mentioned the matter of his arrival to her, hoping vainly that he might not come. Fatuous thought. Wild horses couldn't prevent George from attaching himself to you, once he had made up his mind.

I couldn't think of anything in particular to say when George had finished telling me what he proposed to do for me—to me might express the idea better—so I offered him a drink. He seemed agreeably surprised, but assented at once, so I mixed him a highball and took one myself. I was beginning to feel that I should need several. What on earth was I to do with him? This superior-looking Albanian personage could hardly be relegated to the kitchen table and the woodshed. I felt sure that my wife, as soon as she saw him, would, in her hospitable way, promptly ask him to dinner. I didn't begrudge George the dinner. Any number of them he was quite welcome to. But I felt that his status in the family circle must be established at once, before things had gone so far that I could no longer establish it at all. This was not snobbishness on my part, but I didn't exactly see how I could have a man as my guest at dinner, introduce him to my wife and friends as Mr. Papakousnikous, and at the close of the meal politely suggest that he mow the lawn or weed the tomato patch. It seemed somehow not just the courteous thing to do. The more I thought the matter over, the more up a tree I found myself. George, however, quite unconscious of my difficulty, sat regarding me with a look of deep and patient devotion, his shiny suitcase standing lonely and appealing beside his chair. I felt morally certain that my wife would suggest the guest chamber, if she ever caught sight of it. She loves to have people staying with us. I imagine she finds it a bit lonely out in the country all day.

I determined to escape from George on some pretext or other and have a council of war with her, and had just risen to put this plan into execution when she suddenly appeared from the garden. She glanced at the new arrival with a puzzled look, then at me. I saw that she was wondering why George was not introduced. There was no way out of it. I winked at her significantly but I don't think she noticed it. "This, my dear," I floundered, "is George. George, Mrs. Compton."

He executed a graceful flourish over her hand and kissed it, murmuring the honor he felt it was to meet the wife of his so great and good friend. He made a hit at once. I have forgotten to say that George is over six feet, with tanned complexion, dark curly hair and the bearing of a mountaineer. She promptly asked him to dinner, and he began a clever little speech of thanks, referring to his "dear Albania" and the hospitable customs of his people. Presently my wife caught sight of the suitcase. "Is Mr.—er—" she hesitated.

"Papakousnikous," I supplied glibly. I had been silently practising it, in anticipation, all the morning.

She gasped a bit, but took it gamely, only dropping a few unimportant syllables. "Is Mr. Papakousnikous going to stay over night?" she inquired.

"Yes," I assured her, with rather a gloomy sigh. I felt sure that he was—considerably over.

"Then why don't you take his grip up to the guest room?" she said. Mollie—that's my wife—is desperately proud of her guest room. She copied it from one she saw illustrated in the *Woman's Home Journal*. I've never ventured to sleep in it myself, but I've often admired its dainty brass bed, with the lace coverlet and pillow shams, its chintz curtains and little row of appropriate books on the white enameled shelf. As a setting for some fluffy young thing from Vassar—Mollie is a Vassar girl—it always struck me as most appropriate, but for George—well, I'm not sure but that he would have preferred the room in the barn, judging from the look which came over his face when I ushered him



in. I told him to make himself comfortable—dinner at two—and fled.

I had a most uncomfortable interview with Mollie. She merely said that I had introduced George to her as a friend, and that she had tried to be nice to him on my account. There was no harm done; he seemed a nice, pleasant sort of chap; on Monday he could go back to town with me and that would be the end of it. He *could*. I knew that. But *would* he? That remained to be seen.

George was very quiet during dinner. He appeared to be thinking deeply. His appetite, I observed, was good. Mollie asked him some questions about his native country, but he seemed disinclined to talk. Afterward we had cigars on the veranda, and then, in desperation, I proposed a walk.

George confided to me, as we went along, that he needed a little money for current expenses, and asked my assistance in the matter of obtaining work. I inquired what sort of work he wanted, but his ideas seemed vague. He waved his hands largely about the horizon and said that he would do anything at all whereby he could make a living—perhaps I could get him a job as a foreman, or a chauffeur, or a private secretary. His tastes, I saw, were catholic. Upon inquiry I learned that he knew no more about running a car than I did, and that is saying a good deal. I wondered whether he had any more definite ideas about the duties of a secretary or a foreman. The news that he really meant to look for a position, however, was gratifying. I told him that I would see what I could do.

That night we had some friends over from Glen Ridge—Professor Johnston and his wife. The Professor at one time had the chair of Greek at Columbia, but is retired. He and George struck up a great friendship, conversed at length in modern Greek, and raced from Marco Bozzaris to Alexander the Great and back in a way that made me dizzy. When supper was over, George volunteered to make some Turkish coffee. He did, with some difficulty, in a saucepan, over the alcohol lamp of the chafing dish. It was mostly grounds, but the Professor

said it was great. Before the evening was over, George was doing the honors of the house, offering my cigars to the Professor, reciting Greek poetry to Mrs. Johnston and my wife, and making himself agreeable generally.

On Monday morning I wrote a letter to a certain contractor who was building a section of macadam road in the neighborhood, asking him to give George a job if he could. I gave the note to the latter, and suggested that he deliver it in person at once. Then I fled for my train, pursued by George's regretful glances. He had fully determined to go to town with me, as a sort of equerry or courier or something.

When I got back, I found that George had been, so he said, unable to find the contractor, so he spent the forenoon under a tree on the front lawn, writing a poem. The afternoon he had employed to better advantage. After an excellent lunch, to which, Mollie informed me, he did ample justice, he explored the garden. He explored it exhaustively, and when he returned, he bore with beaming countenance a huge bouquet, consisting of all the blooms from my wife's blue hydrangea, and most of the yellow roses from a rambler that I had, with much coaxing, induced to grow on a trellis over the kitchen door. Mollie, almost in tears, exhibited the remains to me on my return. The blue and yellow blossoms swore at each other in blue and yellow dissonance, and with green and purple intensity I also swore, but in silence. I am nothing if not polite, but when George appeared I determined to voice a mild reproof. It died unnoticed upon my lips, however. The baby, who had been making up her mind about George ever since his first appearance, rushed to him and clasped him enthusiastically about the knees. She had evidently decided that he would do.

His face flushed with pleasure, and sitting down, he produced a variety of objects for her amusement. There were a couple of ancient chocolate drops, which she bolted forthwith, somewhat to the disadvantage of her clean romper and a picture postcard of an Albanian



family—materfamilias and the babies in swathings of embroidered stuffs, and paterfamilias brandishing a gun and trying to preserve his dignity in stiff white pettiskirts and a pair of red bedroom slippers. Mollie junior pointed an accusing finger at the gentleman's generously exposed legs. "Man fordod his panties," she lisped severely. My wife laughed so much that she quite lost sight of the raped hydrangeas.

That evening George sat alone on the lawn and watched the moon come up behind the clump of oaks across the road. I selected the porch rocker with the least betraying squeak, lit my pipe, and prepared to bathe my somewhat tried spirit in the white tranquillity of the night. It was very still. Suddenly a sound, between the wail of a lost soul and the groan of a rusty hinge, rent the silence in twain. George, it appears, was singing. The dog in the next yard, scenting a rival moon-bayer, gave a short yelp of mingled jealousy and pain and slunk vanquished into the house. George's singing was too much for him.

It was a wild chant. He informed me afterward that in such manner the wild tribesmen pay tribute, around the campfire, to the vanished virtues of George Castrioti, or Scanderbeg, the first (and last) king of Albania. It seems to me that he has a good deal to be thankful for. Being dead, he can't hear it, and that is something. Mollie came out presently and went down on the lawn. I guess she thought George had broken a blood vessel, or something of the sort. I joined her. We found George, a swaying, drooping shadow beneath the walnut tree, weeping copious tears into a large freshly laundered pocket handkerchief. I asked him what was the matter, and he said something about the "demful one." It later appeared that "demful" meant damn fool, and that he was applying the epithet to his former companion in arms, whose elopement with the dressmaker had robbed his dear Albania of her sole remaining chance for freedom.

I told George to come on up to the veranda and forget it. Mollie patted him consolingly on the back. That was

a mistake. You may pat an American born man, and he will take it at its palm value, but it is about as safe for a pretty woman to pat a can of nitroglycerine as an Albanian. In an ecstasy of gratitude George seized her hand, kissed it several times (I thought for a moment he was going to embrace her), then plunged away into the shadows, overcome.

An hour or two later I crept down from our bedroom, at Mollie's request, to reconnoitre. George had disdained the ruffled splendors of the guest chamber. Wrapped in a carriage robe that he had found in the barn, he lay on the ground under the walnut tree, sleeping peacefully, and dreaming doubtless of his "dear Albania." I couldn't help wishing that he had stayed there.

The days passed with uneventful rapidity, and still George remained. Each morning he culled my cherished flowers with the delightful impartiality of a child, placing them as an offering of eternal devotion on Mollie's desk. The baby adored him, principally, I suppose, because he made boats for her out of carefully carved bits of bark, and taught her how to shoot with a bow and arrow. They did not entirely understand each other's language, but their communings were delicious to behold. I fancy they spoke much in the universal language of laughter, and even I found it infectious.

Still, I did not see why I should be forever saddled with George. In the mornings he spoke of looking for work. In the afternoons he wrote poems under the trees, which he brought to Mollie, and proudly translated into English for her benefit. They seemed to be principally about the stars, and flowers, and the "beautiful mountynes" of his beloved Albania. In the evenings he bayed the moon, in odes to liberty which went on and on and on. If only George would, I reflected. He had informed me that his father owned an olive grove and a thousand sheep. If only George would develop a burning desire to tend them.

It was obvious that I could not tie a stone to his collar and drop him into the canal. It was equally obvious that to envelop him in a feed bag and let him loose a few miles across country would



result in nothing. My hints that he continue his travels fell on unheeding ears. Was I not his patron, and he my devoted slave? I began to see that it is awkward, at times, to have a slave wished on you. Meanwhile George gazed at me with patient and devoted eyes, and continued to smoke my cigars with the air of a connoisseur.

I did make one desperate attempt to lose him. Bill Barkley, one of my neighbors, who owns a racing car, suggested the scheme. He drove over one afternoon, and inveigled George into taking a ride. The latter was delighted. He had never ridden in an auto.

They went about twenty miles into the next State, I judge, from what Barkley told me afterward, and then he slowed down and proceeded to go into raptures over some wild carrot in an adjoining meadow. He said he would get out and pick some for his wife, but that he was afraid to leave the car; that it was of a cranky disposition, and liable to start off at any moment. Would George pick the flowers that Barkley so ardently desired to present to his wife?

George would. He has an unsuspecting nature. He descended from the car. And right there Barkley made a fatal mistake. He should have waited until George was safely planted beside a bunch of wild carrot in the neighboring field. Instead, he started right off as soon as the latter had reached the ground, and never looked back.

An hour or two later he drew up to my door, and started in to tell me of the success of his scheme. He hadn't spoken two words when George crawled reproachfully from the back axle and asked me for a cigarette. Whether he realized my part in the infamous plan to deport him I never knew. He still continued to smoke my cigars.

At last my patience gave out, and I made up my mind that George would have to go. He had begun to get on my nerves. I remember that I reached the decision coming home one evening on the train, and I determined that as soon as I reached the house I would explain to him, as delicately as I could, that we were weary of his presence, and would

he kindly find a new patron and slave master. I didn't know just how he would take it, but I was very determined. George must go.

I didn't see him about as I came up to the house, but I saw Mollie standing on the veranda, and I thought, as I approached, that she seemed distinctly worried. "The baby is gone," she cried to me, as I reached the steps.

"Gone!" I am sure that I turned white. "What do you mean?"

"I missed her about fifteen minutes ago. It is Sarah's afternoon off." Sarah is our maid. "When I last saw her she was playing on the lawn."

"And George?" I gasped. Unworthily I thought for the moment that he might have made off with her.

"He was in the library, reading. I've sent him to inquire of the neighbors."

I threw my afternoon papers on the veranda. "We must go hunt for her at once," I said, trying to appear calm. The baby is almost as dear to me as Mollie herself, and that is more than I could ever hope to tell.

We hadn't gone fifty feet when we saw George returning alone. He looked very much alarmed, and explained, in his broken English, that none of the neighbors had seen the child, except one woman, who had noticed her going in the direction of the quarry road.

Mollie and I looked at each other, very white. There is an abandoned quarry about half a mile from where we live, and the children love to go and throw stones into the water which partly fills it. The baby had been there on several occasions, with me, but she had been sternly told never to go there alone. We both started off toward it, without saying a word, and George followed patiently in the rear.

In fifteen minutes we were there. It is a great yawning hole in the ground, with precipitous moss-grown sides of rock, and a pool of stagnant green water at the bottom, some fifty feet down. I glanced over the edge, too frightened to breathe, and then my heart stood still. There, about halfway down the side of the rock, and crumpled against a fragile and stunted bit of cedar tree, lay little



Mollie. She was alive, I soon saw, from the efforts she was making to free herself, and I knew at once that the moment she succeeded she would plunge into the water below. There was not an instant to be lost—and yet what could I do? To climb down the almost perpendicular face of the cliff was impossible. To descend by the more sloping path on the opposite side of the quarry would avail me nothing, for not only would I be obliged to swim the pool at the bottom, but having done so, I would be as unable to climb up to the child as I was to climb down.

Suddenly I heard a scrambling sound, and turned. George had slipped off his shoes and coat, and was halfway over the edge of the quarry. I gazed at him spellbound. It seemed impossible that anyone could descend that almost perpendicular wall. I did not take into consideration his boyhood training among the mountains of his native Albania.

Slowly, inch by inch almost, he made his way toward the struggling child, while Mollie and I held our breaths and prayed in agonized silence. With the hands and feet of a fly, he clung to that slippery wall, taking advantage of every crevice and seam in the rock. After what seemed to us hours, he reached the bit of cedar brush which held the child, and setting his foot against its root, reached down and took her in one of his powerful hands by the folds of her dress. I did not heave any sighs of relief—matters seemed as bad as ever. Great as was his skill, I realized that he could not climb one foot up that rocky wall with the child in his arms.

George, however, knew what he was about. Holding the baby high against his left shoulder, he slowly allowed himself to slide down the remaining distance to the pool. They fell with a great splash, but I saw that he held the child's head well free of the water. In a moment he had struck out, and with powerful strokes was making for the opposite side of the quarry.

Mollie and I tore around the edge to meet him, but he had already ascended the sloping side when we arrived. She reached for the baby and kissed it, and

in my excitement I imagine I must have kissed George. He was a sad sight, with his cherished (and only) suit covered with mud and slime, his hands torn and bleeding, his shoes a hopeless wreck from the sharp edges of the stone.

We all got home as quickly as possible, and when we had calmed down, and put the baby to bed, and George had been rigged out in my best Sunday suit, which failed to fit him by inches in every direction, Mollie and I tried to thank him. It was hard work, too, especially when I remembered how I had tried to deport him with the automobile, and my intentions on arriving home that very evening. George took it all very placidly. Was he not my slave, and I his most noble patron? I swore then and there that he was welcome to the guest chamber and my cigars and anything else I had for the rest of his natural life if he cared to stay with us, and told him so. But he didn't stay.

The very next day he showed me a letter he had received. His father was dead, it seems, and his mother wanted him to come back home at once to run the olive grove and the sheep farm. Great as was his regret to leave his noble patron, it was his duty to go. And would I lend him the passage money?

I did so, not without regret at his departure. When he left us, at the steamer, he said he would send us some olive oil and other things. I had completely forgotten it when one day I received a notice from the steamship company. There was a cask and also a large package for me. George had not forgotten. There was enough olive oil to last us the rest of our natural lives, besides some beautiful sheepskins and quantities of candies of the most remarkable nature and a complete Albanian costume for little Mollie. There was also a letter from George, returning the passage money, which I had assured him I did not want, and an invitation to come and visit him at his farm.

Mollie and I have been talking about a European trip for five years—ever since we have been married. If we go next year, our greatest pleasure will be to make George a visit.



# MANHOOD

By Willard A. Wattles

OUT of the reek and swelter, out of the sink of shame;  
Shape us the perfect manhood that leaps like a living flame.

The Old World's foul corruption is poured on our naked shores,  
And the soul of the nation festers, ulcerate with sores.  
The sons of the Pilgrim Fathers, on the hills their fathers trod,  
Have reared Gomorrah and Sodom in the face of their fathers' God;  
And the land of the bloody meadows, of slaughtered brother and son  
Is foul with the nameless vintage of perished Babylon.  
The fields of folly are ripened, red and shameless and bold;  
The harvest is ready for reaping, and Esau's birthright sold.

The brave little *Mayflower* breasted the thundering leagues of foam,  
But the peoples she engendered have builded a modern Rome.  
The land of Standish and Edwards, Revere and Nathan Hale,  
Has clanged to the clamoring cymbals in the hands of the priests of Baal.

Better the blast of sirocco and a sudden terrible death  
Than to dwell in the tents of the godless and suckle a harlot's breath.  
Better a nation perish, root and blossom and branch,  
Whelmed by the mighty thunder of God's great avalanche,  
Than rear in their perfumed cities a brood with feeble chins  
Whose delicate fingers tickle emasculate violins,  
Where palaces of marble rise over Eastern seas  
And people starve, while wantons batten on luxuries.

Out of America's sorrow, out of America's shame,  
Shape us, O God, the manhood that leaps like a living flame.



NO man is as handsome as he thinks the girls think he is.



MANY a man starts on a honeymoon only to come back on a lecture tour.



## "SEASON WITH SALT"

By Hugh Johnson

WHEN, after the ratification of the Constitution, the army was pared down to the fine point of almost nothing at all, there was still a Crowley on the muster rolls. There has been one ever since and, as old Crownshield at West Point will tell you, they have all been hale, rubicund, brothers of men, four-square and human.

Old Crownshield should know. After both of his own legs were shot away at Pine Ridge, he stumped back to West Point on his new cork ones and Congress made him librarian. Since his own career was ended, he made a specialty of the careers of other men. He knows more about the graduates of the Military Academy than any living man, and he sits there like an ancient pursuivant, pottering among the escutcheons of the nation's Valhalla.

The latest Crowley was Colonel Fred, of the Seventeenth Cavalry, as hearty, husky and lovable a man as any of them, but he dallied on toward forty-five, to the excruciating annoyance of old Crownshield, before he took a wife; and when he did, it was an eighteen-year-old chit of a hard-riding girl that he met in the Fifteenth at Fort Missoula. A little son came to gladden their hearts, but he brought no gladness to Crownshield, who saw him at West Point in his twelfth year, when he came up from Groton to spend his vacation at the Academy. The old fellow used to hobble around after the spindle-legged boy, shaking his grizzled head.

"That a Crowley! That fizzlumsizzlum sissy!" he would growl. "That mincing mother's boy!"

After a toddy, he would sometimes brighten.

"But West Point'll get him. Wait till he's weathered a Beasts' Barracks. Wait till he's been a plebe. The yearlings'll make a man of him."

West Point is a democracy if there is one. Sons of rich men, of famous men, of poor men, possibly sons of beggar men, and just perhaps of thieves, come there. The simple gray tunic is a great leveler, and Beasts' Barracks (the new plebes' first month's quarters) is another. After a famous general's son, ridiculously garbed, has ridden the company street on a broomstick for hours on end, throughout a whole summer, crying, "Turn, boys, turn—we're going back," he is likely to desire devoutly that no one shall ever know whose son he is; and I have seen a scion of wealth, who had unfortunately referred to his uncle's fortune, wearily counting the myriad pebbles on a gravel parade ground, and monotonously chanting, for the edification of whoever might pass, "Gold—gold—I'm counting uncle's gold—"

But when slender young Crowley reported for his plebe outfit, none of old Crownshield's prophecies came true. The lad was too clever. He effaced himself gently that first year, and Beasts' Barracks left him unscathed. On the day he became a yearling, he blossomed from his gray retirement.

Poor Crowley, '04—I can close my eyes and see him as plainly as though ten years were nothing. Brilliant—that's what he was, a star man in the academic department, and the idol of the Commandant's eye as a model of what a soldier should be in appearance and manner. He did not play football—too tall and slender—but he fenced



like a marquis of the Grand Monarque and rode with the long-legged grace of a Comanche warrior.

There he goes (in my mind's vision) across the barrack's area in his full dress, black plume shimmering, square gray shoulders in their waxed-on coat swinging to his stride, while the awed beasts, the young plebes, gazed at his glory of gold lace chevrons and brass and black slashings.

"Crowley," they whisper—"Crowley, '04—adjutant. Gee, d'you s'pose we'll ever look like *that*?"

But it wasn't only plebes that spoiled Crowley; it was his own classmates, officers on duty at the Point—the Superintendent himself. Admiration, adulation—these came to be the breath of the boy's nostrils.

He did not become detestable—not with that brain of his. If he had grown to be a prig, it was an inward growth. There was poor Wooden Wallen, for instance. Men forgot and ignored and neglected Wallen. Crowley didn't. It was, "Wally, old boy, how goes the math?" and an arm across Wallen's shoulder down the hall, and yet Wally, old boy, would go away resentful—Wally, who would have welcomed friendly recognition from a plebe. Human sympathy is as intangible as ether, and yet it is as much in fact as fire—Crowley didn't have it. He imitated it. He couldn't feel it.

Old Crownshield watched his course with broken-hearted disgust.

"He may come to be a fine social aid," the librarian grumbled, "a bearer of wraps and an embellisher of hop cards. He'll never be a Crowley, or a soldier, or a man."

And then something happened down on the Mexican border to give old Crownshield hope.

Colonel Fred Crowley died. In due time the lawyer men came and pawed over his papers. Then they presented to the young widow (whom the thoughtless old Colonel had kept securely sheltered from the practical side of life) a puzzling balance sheet which she did not in the least understand, but which showed, they said, a list of liabilities

neatly and precisely balancing the assets on the other half of the page. They also said that, since the Colonel had been away on leave when his horse fell, there would be no pension, and after many recapitulations they managed to bring the frightened little woman to some comprehension of a very grim reality.

Naturally, her first appealing glance fell on the ivory-framed photograph of her son that stood on her bedside table. The capable, intelligent face gave her great comfort and confidence, until her glance fell to the carefully-carelessly exposed gray sleeve with its splendor of gold lace, the adjutant's chevrons of which she had been so proud. The boy was on the high road to a brilliant army career, that must never suffer through word or deed of hers.

Among all the kind and thoughtful letters that came to her in the next month was one that made up in material worth a great deal that it lacked in form—it was typewritten on pink paper and in purple ink, and another of old Crownshield's hopes went glimmering, for Crowley's mother wrote to her boy,

—I find, and just in the nick of time, dear Freddie, that I have fallen into a very comfortable living—a larger income than most army widows have. I can even travel a little, and that helps the time pass until you graduate. So let me hear no more about your leaving the Academy to care for me. Forget your father's affairs and continue to make your mother proud of her big son chum, his high marks in math and his adjutant's chevrons. I'll be with you for a day or two in the first week in June, and after that often—

And she did come to West Point.

It is through the visitors that the West Point democracy breaks down—if it does break down—and in June the old Revolutionary outpost on the Hudson swarms with them. They, their dress, their manners, their style of living, tell the story of the cadet they come to see far more effectively than any pretensions of his could ever tell it, and well enough Crowley's mother knew this. At what pains and sacrifice she provided the dainty gowns she wore no one will ever know. Every ribbon, buckle and furbelow was worn with that in view,



and he rewarded her with a most evident pride.

Cadets and visitors alike always stopped their talk and gazed in frank approval as Crowley and his mother passed. Always daintily, even exquisitely clad, with the face and figure of a woman of thirty, there was still never a moment's doubt of the relationship she bore to the tall cadet at her side. Her look of contentment and adoration told that beyond question.

In sharp contrast to Crowley and his mother were Wooden Wallen and *his* family. They came up for the same encampment—a humped-over old woman in a black bonnet, with hands all knotted and work-reddened, and a grizzled little man that—well, you knew at a glance that he had forced a living from the world with his hands and not with his brain. They were awkward and apologetic, but they looked upon Wallen with a world of pride and evident satisfaction. One day Wallen was walking with them past the guard tent and a yearling on the visitors' seats sniggered (it was the fashion to snigger at Wallen) and a group of people smiled. Crowley—of course he meant well—got up from his seat beside his mother.

"Mother," he said, in a voice that could be generally heard, "I want you to meet Wallen's family." And he introduced himself and then his dainty patrician little mother, and Wallen was embarrassed and uncomfortable, and sweet and gracious as Crowley's mother was, Wallen's people were bitterly abashed, yet Crowley went away filled with self-gratulation and confident that by his condescension he had served Wallen an excellent turn.

In the following week, the corps of cadets went down to Madison Square Garden in the city as the guests of the president of the West Shore Railroad and Pawnee Bill Fettermen, and incidentally, I think, as a sort of uniformed advertisement of Pawnee Bill's Only and Unprecedented Wild West Show. They certainly made a very notable splotch of cadet gray in the banked mass of color on the seats.

The prime feature of that show is the

Congress of the World's Horsemen, and then the "turn" of Kalamity Kate, rough rider and mounted rifle shot.

The ring fills with what the posters call a Kataklysmic and Kaleidoscopic Karavan of Kolor—mounted platoons in the varied uniforms of all the famous cavalry regiments of the world, who rush in and march and countermarch under the arc lights and finally charge away with a pandemonium of cries and thundering hoofs. Of course many were aware that the "Seventeenth Lancers" never saw the torn standards of the "Death or Glory Boys," that the nearest the hooting "Cossacks" ever came to the Don was when Pawnee Bill showed in Paris, and that most of the cuirassed "Household Cavalry" came from various American regiments by the short and ugly route. It is all tinsel sham and blatant buncombe, but it is spectacular, and it prepares the scene for Kalamity Kate.

In the hush that follows the flight of the Congress, a trumpet blares, and, with a high-throated "Yip-yi-yi-yi-yi—" Kate dashes through the curtains at a run, while, resplendent in buckskin fringe, beads and silver, the white-haired Colonel draws his curvetting Arab up in front of the "honor section," doffs his sombrero in a sweeping bow and proclaims:

"Frances J. Kester, better known to old scouts and plainsmen as Kalamity Kate, world's champeen ee-questrian rough rider and ladee rifle shot.

"The littul ladee, riding at prodid-jus speed, will now shoot glass balls and marbuls, flying in *the* air."

On this hot August evening, the spectacle went through its dizzy succession of features, the Congress wheeled and charged, the trumpet blared, the entrance curtains drew back, and into the tanbark ring, with her ululating "Yip-yi-i-i-i—" dashed Kate. But the cry ceased so suddenly that half the cadets in the honor section stood up, thinking she had fallen.

Crowley and the Cadet First Captain sat in a box at the ringside. They had been called there by the Superintendent, who always sent for Crowley whenever



there was special attendance to be danced on a celebrity. Some of the Washington official set had come down—a Cabinet member, I think, a general or two, these and some much-to-be-sought-after New York people, with, of course, their ladies. One of the girls we first classmen knew. We used to devil Crowley about her, and he liked it.

He was sitting beside her, leaning over the box rail and looking down at the track not six feet below him. Standing there in the tanbark was a dismounted Cossack, with drawn yataghan, holding a lean little gray mare—sort of an ornamental guard of honor, I suppose.

The world's champion rifle shot did not fall. She cut viciously at her pony with her quirt, and he was a hammer-headed little plains bronco and he did not like that. He swerved from the track, but she pulled him back and circled furiously just below us. The Colonel cantered along beside her and tossed into the air the first of the glass globes that she was to break with a bullet. That pony had been put all at outs with his task. Kate should have dropped her knotted reins over the pommel—he wouldn't let her. He kept fighting for his head, and she had to hold her leathers taut with her left hand while she tried to work the pump mechanism of her repeater.

She missed three in seven of those glass balls, and I saw Crowley make a gesture as though he were aiming a gun, and then say something to the girl beside him that caused her to laugh immoderately.

The little lady wheeled at the end of the arena and galloped down its center, dropping at discreet intervals a glove, a pistol, her kerchief and her rifle. We knew just what was coming. It is a feature of every cavalry field day—Crowley himself was letter perfect in it. You gallop down—the faster you go the easier the trick—keeping the things you've dropped on your left. Then you hook your right spur in the cantle of your saddle. That holds you so firmly that you couldn't fall off if you tried. Resting your weight on the left stirrup, you reach down and get the glove; when

you've put that on, there is just time to get the pistol, fire it and put it away, then you are opposite the kerchief; you knot that about your neck, reach and fire the rifle. The trick is to keep your horse going straight and at just the right distance from the line of things on the ground—and to be sure you've a good strong spur strap.

The little lady retrieved the glove easily, then the pistol, but at the third strain upon it her right spur strap broke. Of course the rider fell. The pony slowed up, but instead of dropping free, the woman's left foot went through the unhooded stirrup and clamped there. That threw her body down on a fixed pivot so that it flopped against the pony's heels. He made a great startled leap and away he went across the tanbark, kicking and plunging in a mad effort to rid himself of the terrifying limp thing that was beating against his legs.

The sight seemed to paralyze the immense crowd. There was a murmur like a great sob—the first appalled intake of breath, and then there fell a hush. If the Garden had been empty, the silence could have been no more profound. But not a soul stirred to help.

I was dimly conscious of what he intended when I saw Crowley's lithe form slip over the box rail. Like a gray deer that Cossack's mare shot across the tanbark, but Crowley, not the Cossack, rode her. The piebald saw them, bolted and doubled back along the wall in front of the corps, but Crowley was too quick. He turned on the inner track, threw his weight across athwart the course of the gray, forced her to fairly wheel on her haunches, forefeet in the air, and thus, leaning dangerously far forward, caught the piebald's flying reins, and, with an exhibition of unusual strength, brought the pony to a stand, dead in his tracks; and that squarely in front of the box of the Secretary.

I remember my feelings perfectly—gratitude and relief, of course, but a sort of an unpleasant sensation that it should have been Crowley—Crowley the ubiquitous, the inevitable—who had



carried off the palm. Why couldn't it have been someone no one ever heard of? Why couldn't it have been Wooden Wallen? A yearling sitting next to me leaned over and said:

"You've got to hand it to him. You can't beat it. If you kicked him over a precipice, he'd catch in a tree and land on a gold mine."

The crowd recovered and screamed itself hoarse, but Crowley didn't hear it. He had slid instantly off the mare and under the piebald's neck. He tilted the stirrup and released the imprisoned foot. Directly above him the people in the Secretary's box were leaning down to watch, and five hundred of his comrades were waiting to know what had really happened before they cheered.

The woman's yellow wig had been torn off and her brown hair streamed over her forearm. Her face was deathly white under its paint and powder. Her eyes were closed, but in spite of that I began to know that it was the face of someone of my acquaintance.

It was a pitifully cruel thing. You could fairly see Crowley stiffen as the iron entered his soul. He let the limp body slip gently down and crouched

backing away, one hand on his cheek, the other clenched over his mouth. But it was the Superintendent who spoke.

"Good God—it's his mother!"

Of course a reader suspects that before it happens in the story. The people sitting above Crowley didn't. With the excitement of what had happened to strengthen it, the shock seemed fairly to tear their hearts. They all knew Crowley and most of them knew his mother.

She wasn't seriously hurt. The Garden ambulance had clanged out and the surgeon on duty ventured that opinion. As the closed wagon trotted away, old Crownshield, who had come plowing down through the tanbark, put an arm across the shoulders of the dazed boy and led him away through an area door.

Next day he stumped into the club and over to the fogies' corner where the gray colonels and majors sit. They hadn't long to wait for his announcement; he was jubilantly ready to make it.

"Ring out, wild bells!" he chuckled, thumping his cane on the hardwood floor. "The salt's been sprinkled in the soup."



## THE STILL PLACES

By Mahlon Leonard Fisher

ONLY the stars look down upon their sleep;  
 Only the light winds, loitering, speak with them;  
 Dawn lays, reluctantly, her diadem  
 On irised isles where shapes of silence creep.  
 Clear fountains flow untasted; rivers leap,  
 Nor ever sense the slip of swift canoe;  
 Fair sunsets blaze and fade and blaze anew,  
 Where unheard husbandmen rich harvest reap.  
 And there are outbound butterflies to chase;  
 And marguerites a-tiptoe in the grass;  
 And idle pools, like pure pellucid glass,  
 A-yearn to mirror there a child's bright face.  
 Brown brooklets dream of barefoot ecstasy  
 And wee white feet where whitest pebbles be.



# I WALKED THE WOOD

By Richard Le Gallienne

I WALKED the wood where Beauty sat enthroned—  
It was the yellow ending of the year;  
And all the trees that wore her liveries  
Flaunted them in a blazon of despair.

She wore the purple aster for her crown,  
And held a slanting sceptre in her hand,  
That with a wild and fitful sovereignty  
Touched here and there with fire the drowsing land.

And all the while before her golden throne  
Fleeted the gallant glories of decay,  
Banner and pennon and flash of lifted spear,  
And radiant shapes too fair to pass away.

Yet had I mind, as this strange queen I saw,  
Of yet another queen in this same wood—  
'Twas about April time—that danced and sang,  
Guileless, unbosomed, in her blossomhood.

So of that queen in whose strange realms I trod  
I asked of that young queen that once did sing,  
And she made answer with a bitter smile  
That the young name of the young queen was Spring.

Then said I: "Was there not also a king  
That ruled these woods with heavy rod of gold?"  
"Summer his name," said she. "Yonder he lies.  
Longer he may not reign—his tale is told."

Two kings, two queens, are regents of the year,  
Each crowned in turn, and each in turn disrealmed:  
Winter by Spring, Summer by Autumn sped,  
Then Autumn's self by Winter overwhelmed.



A HENPECKED man never crows over it.



# OH, PERFECT LOVE!

By Freeman Tilden

Freeman Tilden is a master of satire, and the following story is an excellent specimen of his best work. Mr. Tilden is now engaged on a series of satirical stories on popular subjects for THE SMART SET. Every thoughtful reader will be interested in observing the two different lines on which the author is working. In "The Defective," in last month's issue, he burlesqued the absurd fads to which some people devote their whole time. This story is not burlesque, but simple realism; but it emphasizes a truth with equal force.

THERE is a village on Cape Cod, not far from where the *Mayflower* put ashore its first cargo of antique furniture. In this village, for more than two centuries and a half, the best families have never married into any but the other best families. As the number of best families allotted to any one village is limited, relationships were not long in becoming extremely complex.

The last remaining member of the best families of this Cape Cod village was removed to an institution recently, after he had walked into the post office clad in a union suit unadorned. The best family is now that of a Portuguese who came to this country in 1892. He has done well in cranberry growing and has a number of automobile tires laid by for a rainy day.

The foregoing is by way of being a parable. It is not inevitably apposite; in truth, it is offered as a sort of literary language to those that read what follows.

The father and mother of Sibyl Curtess were advanced persons. Old man Curtess was in the leather business, but he had time for other interests; and one of his interests was eugenics. Eugenics being a broad subject, he had specialized on Sibyl; and it must be admitted that he, with the assistance of Sibyl's mother, had done pretty well.

In the first place, Sibyl was beautiful. Even the women of Borton said so. Her beauty was almost without flaw. People—the ruder folks—used to express wonder about this phenomenon, for Sibyl's mother was plain, and old man Curtess, owing to an eccentricity in the facial and hirsute scheme, somewhat resembled a walrus.

But Sibyl Curtess was not merely beautiful. She was ruggedly healthy. And not only that; she was intelligent besides. Life seemed to have labored to bring forth a supertype in the person of this girl. So far as beauty, health and mind were concerned, life had done well.

It was part of Mr. Curtess's plan not to bring up his child in ignorance of life. Mrs. Curtess, being equally advanced, concurred in this determination. One of the consequences was that when Sibyl was fourteen she knew so much about the human species that her conversation might bring a blush to the cheek of a veteran anatomist.

Borton was not a large town. Over most of the dinner tables in Borton, when mixed company sat, the talk was guarded, and some subjects were taboo. At the Curtess home no subject was taboo. Discussion was open. Old man Curtess was wont to brag that he had no secrets from his family. Some years later it was discovered that he had a small checking account with a bank



in Springfield, not hitherto advertised. But this was a small matter.

One night, at the evening meal, when Sibyl was away from home, old man Curtess suddenly laid down his knife and fork, took off his spectacles, polished them with breath and handkerchief and hemmed. This operation was always preliminary to an important communication, and Mrs. Curtess looked expectant.

"What do you think of that Laughton boy, Grace?" asked old man Curtess.

"I know what you're thinking of," was the reply.

"Very likely. But what do you think of him?"

"In regard to Sibyl?"

"Of course."

Mrs. Curtess sighed. "I like the idea," she replied. "In fact, Will, you know as well as I do there's nobody else. All the rest in this town are impossibles, and most of those out of town are just as impossible."

"Sibyl's only sixteen," went on Curtess, "but it's none too early to plan. Now, to my mind, young Laughton is a perfect mate. You know what I mean."

Mrs. Curtess knew indeed. They spoke of marriage always as mating, being good eugenists. They were not cold-blooded about it, however. Much as the eugenicist dreads accident, he admits love. And this was the basis of the sigh from Mrs. Curtess. She knew Sibyl's opinion of Ernest Patterson Laughton.

"She doesn't like him," said Mrs. Curtess.

"Rot. She's only sixteen. She doesn't know what she wants yet. We don't want to marry the girl off. We merely want to lay plans. And, to my mind, it's none too early to begin. We've seen enough cases where—"

Mrs. Curtess nodded.

"He's physically sound, well educated, and he'll have a good business of his own some day; and that's not to be sneezed at," went on Curtess with enthusiasm. "His habits are the very best; I know that on good authority. He enters Harvard this fall; and they

say he leads the class in scholarship. And he's no mollycoddle, either. No mollycoddle could be captain of the football team in his third year in high school. It seems to me, Grace, that he's simply ideal for—for a eugenic marriage. Now, if our Sibyl—"

"That's just the trouble, Will. Sibyl said to me the other day (and I hadn't even mentioned him, either) that she 'couldn't stand that Laughton fellow.' Those were her words."

"Did she give any reason?"

"Well, she said something about his being a bore."

"Nothing else?"

"No, I think not."

Old man Curtess puffed his cheeks full of air, and then expelled it from a pleased mouth. It did not strike him that being a bore was a sinister thing, in the face of so many patent merits. If he had been a highly imaginative man, it might have occurred to him that the superman, when achieved, will probably be a bore. But he was not highly imaginative.

"Well, she's still young," was the rather uneasy comment of the mother.

"Oh, yes; time enough to think it over."

During the week following this conversation Sibyl discovered that she was in love with a young man named Richard O'Malley. She had had no secrets from her father and mother—until now. As to this revelation she decided to wait a little while, on the reasonable ground that it might prove to be a false alarm. Not every high school girl would be so philosophical about it; but Sibyl had grown up in an advanced atmosphere. So she told nobody—not even Dick O'Malley.

Dick O'Malley was from one of Borton's worst families. He was a thin, dark-haired, short lad, not overwell favored in any point of physical development. His cheeks, and more particularly his eyes, showed a marked tendency toward tuberculosis, of which his mother had died. His father had died several years before of what would have been called, in better social circles, cirrhosis, but which was described in the instance of the late father O'Malley as



alcoholism. Or, in the Saxon directness of Borton, simply "drink."

Altogether, poor little Dick O'Malley was the least eugenic member of his class in the high school. Sibyl had heard enough at home to know that she should not fall in love with anybody whose vital statistics were like those of Dick O'Malley; and yet, at the age of sixteen and odd, that is just what she did. If asked why, she could probably have given but one coherent reason: he was not a bore.

Sibyl kept the matter in her heart for some days, and then one afternoon it occurred to her that she was betraying the confidence of her parents. Both her father and mother had often said to her: "Sibyl, no matter what you think or feel, don't be afraid to tell us. We shall understand." She felt that she should have gone to them directly. The next best thing was to take Dick O'Malley home with her and speak her mind freely in the presence of her parents.

It is one thing to plan to take a young man like Dick O'Malley to one's home, and quite another to get him to go thither. The Curtess family lived on Ruggles Street, which was the Fifth Avenue of Borton, considering the real Fifth Avenue as it was before Trade sneaked in and began to advertise fire-and-water sales of high-priced articles. The Reardons, with whom Dick boarded, resided on lower Main Street, in unhygienic proximity to a soap rendering factory, a vicinage further socially cursed by the presence of a gashouse. The first effort of Sibyl got Dick as far as the post office. On another occasion he went to the corner of Ruggles and North Main, carrying Sibyl's school books. This wild excess of gallantry was observed, and it was pleasantly advertised, in the freemasonic circles of high school life, that Miss Curtess had a "crush" on Dick O'Malley.

One evening, just before supper time, when Mr. Curtess had got into slippers to read the Boston *Transcript* (a journal never intended to be perused with the boots on), Sibyl came in with Dick in tow. She had discovered the way to do it, at last. A simple plan: that of hav-

ing a large parcel post package arrive opportunely, and inviting her escort to bring it along.

"Father," said the young woman, speaking with the frankness and directness which had always brought a premium in the Curtess household, "this is Dick O'Malley."

Old man Curtess looked up and down the person of the youthful visitor. The expression of his face showed that he was not pleased with what his daughter had brought home with her. But he said, simply, "Ah? Very glad to see you, young man," and wondered whether the proprieties demanded the proffer of a gratuity in the form of supper.

"He is in my class in school," said the miss, "and I love him very much."

The information, so sincerely uttered, was electric. Two explosions followed. Mr. Dick, who had been standing awkwardly at the door, turned quickly and made his escape from the house the way he had come, nearly keeling over Mrs. Curtess when she loomed in his path. He stopped running only when he had rounded the corner of the street.

Mr. Curtess rose from his chair as if a hand from above had seized him by the coat collar. "What!" he shouted.

The result of her announcement disconcerted Sibyl. It had not occurred to her that Dick O'Malley would bolt; and it had not even occurred to her that her father would rise—in that manner—and say "What!" So she burst out crying.

"Is this a joke?" asked old man Curtess. He knew well enough it was no joke. Jokes are not usually accompanied by floods of tears.

There was no reply.

"Well, I'm damned!" was the next comment.

Mrs. Curtess came in with a "What's the matter, Sibyl?" No reply to that. Then, "What's the matter with her, Will?"

"Do you know anything about this—John—O'Malley?" asked Curtess. It was the meanest thing he could think of—to call the youth out of his name.

"Dick," corrected Sibyl, not too far gone to defend her ideal. "Richard."



"I never heard of him," replied Mrs. Curtess, stooping to gather up the straying pages of his newspaper. Then, as Sibyl would not repeat in the presence of a hostile audience, Curtess repeated for her.

Between that time and eleven o'clock Sibyl made some important discoveries about the rules governing advanced thought and conduct. She found out that the injunction to speak and think frankly upon all subjects was modified by another injunction, hitherto unmentioned, not to speak or think of "unworthy" things. Among the unworthy things was Dick.

By half past eight it was a foregone conclusion that young O'Malley would go the way of his father. At nine o'clock Mr. Curtess avowed himself an open-minded man, no dictator. At half past nine some words were spoken to the effect that one should think of the future of the race. At eleven Sibyl went to bed, her romance having been interred under six sodfeet of eugenics. Love likes silence, silent places, unspoken communion. Talk is rank poison to it. At eleven Sibyl affixed her gum to the side of the toilet table and went to sleep, and dreamed about falling out of a balloon.

Five years afterward Ernest Patterson Laughton had been graduated from college and into his father's business, Sibyl had become a eugenicist in her own right and Dick O'Malley had become a chauffeur.

Young Laughton (he had been called "a perfect specimen of manhood" by the director of the Y. M. C. A. gymnasium) had improved mentally and physically. It seemed impossible that nature could have done it all alone; in fact, Mr. and Mrs. Laughton doubted it. Ernest had one of those faces which, about that time, was making the twenty-five-dollar suit famous. That is to say, the angular jaw, high-brushed hair, slightly wavy, and the pinkish color that cries health. He took cold baths—ice cold—every morning.

Dick O'Malley did not look well. He had one of those faces that are always

navy blue, owing to a dark, intensive growth of beard; he was miserably thin; his habits were said to be such as the school physiology textbooks aim to prevent. Yet he was a good chauffeur. The Laughtons, for whom he drove, spoke of him in the highest terms of praise—that is, they said they had no complaint to make against him.

Sibyl had grown more beautiful, more intelligent, more ideally eugenic. She was enthusiastic, now, for race improvement. She knew Mendel by heart; perfectly understood the theory of the breeding of peas, and arguing from the well known fact that human beings are but animate peas, worked out a charming result. She looked forward to a perfect race, the equals of the gods of mythology.

Old man Curtess had not been idle. He had cemented a relationship business and social between the two families. It was agreed, even while Ernest was in college, that this would be the rapturously successful and scientific match. It was necessary, first, to fix the young man's position. He must get started in business, build a suitable house upon a proper site, and perform all the pre-nuptial duties of a man who expects to be married but once. He had also, in the interest of his business, to join several secret societies founded upon the idea of unselfish brotherhood. So that he was twenty-four years old and Sibyl was twenty-two when they were engaged.

For they were engaged. Everybody expected it; it was the subject that Borton always fell back on when the clock began to be audible. The *Borton Gazette* wrote, using no names, about a certain "youthful friendship that had ripened into love." This perfect mating seemed certain to eventuate. Mr. and Mrs. Laughton desired it. Ernest Laughton desired it. Mr. and Mrs. Curtess desired it. Sibyl, as a eugenicist, desired it. Borton demanded it.

To Sibyl there was but one drawback. She saw the marriage in its scientific aspects, and it pleased her. She felt a responsibility for future ages; and that was very satisfying. But for the pres-



ent, the imminent *now*, she acknowledged to herself in the recesses of her closet that she did not feel attracted by the personality of Ernest. Strive as she would to keep down the suggestion, she was forced to admit that he was still a bore—even more of a bore than ever. Into the catalogue of his perfections, that one item intruded itself and overshadowed the rest. Naturally, she made no inquiries for her soul. In the first place, she did not presuppose a soul; and then, she was not concerned with love, but with Mendel. She was a student, and she had academic zeal.

It happened one day, as Sibyl was in her room with her spring clothes, that Mrs. Curtess came breathlessly to the door and exclaimed: "Now don't be worried, dear. Ernest wasn't hurt a bit. But his automobile has just been in an accident. It was the driver that was hurt, so somebody said. I haven't got all the details."

"The driver? Dick O'Malley?"

"I suppose so. I heard somebody say that the man that was driving the car was taken to the hospital. The accident happened in Leicester."

Suddenly Sibyl saw the thin, bluish face of little Dick O'Malley; and in the same moment there flashed into her mind the picture of herself bringing Dick home one evening to declare her love. She fancied him lying on the ground, bleeding. . . .

Sibyl ran to the telephone and called one of the local florists. "Make me up a big bunch of flowers to send to a friend in the hospital. . . . No, I don't know which hospital it is, yet; it's an accident. . . . Yes. . . . No; ten dollars' worth will be all right. . . . I'll tell you where to send them as soon as I find out. . . . Good-bye."

She got into her street clothes hastily. To her mother she said:

"I'm going to run down street and find out what hospital they've taken the driver to. We couldn't do less, you know." She did not care to tell her mother that she was on her way to the hospital in person. But just as she was going out the street door, her father

came in. He was puffing hard with excitement, although he had driven up from his office in the car. "Easy, now, Sibyl," he said. "You're a clever girl, so I can tell you without beating round the bush. Ernest is hurt—not badly, I hope. Auto accident. Dammit, they're getting altogether too common these days. He's at the hospital. Now don't get all shot to pieces about it. It may not be serious at all."

"But—but they said it was the driver that was hurt."

"Oh, you've heard? Well, Ernest was driving the car himself at the time."

"Oh!" was Sibyl's reply.

Her father drove away immediately, promising to telephone as soon as he heard the details. Soon afterward Sibyl went out, too. From the telephone pay station at the nearest drugstore she telephoned to the florist.

"Have you made up that order for Miss Curtess yet? . . . Well, please change it to a bunch for about two dollars and a half."

"I mustn't be so impulsive," Sibyl said to herself as she came out of the drugstore. "Ten dollars for flowers is quite absurd." And she somehow convinced herself that this move was prompted by pure economy.

Laughton's injuries were not serious, and the marriage took place a short time afterward. Some marriages are undoubtedly made in heaven; from which we may conclude that heaven enjoys its little joke now and then. But this marriage was made in Borton. It was stamped with the hallmark of Borton gossip, Borton conventions, Borton romance. Borton cared not a bit for eugenics; Borton did not know what the word meant; but Borton knew two ideal specimens of human being when it saw them, and knew that this pair was "meant for each other." It was not a large town; nearly everybody knew everybody permissible to know. Borton felt that it had brought this couple up by hand.

They were married. It was what is called a "quiet wedding," presumably because no dynamite is employed. The high contracting parties frowned upon



the use of rice, old shoes and fishhorns; but science and refinement both must give way to a powerful local sentiment. The *Æolus* Male Quartet sang several songs, among which was the classic: "Oh, Perfect Love!" The aptness of this selection was duly commented upon.

Sibyl and Ernest, being refined persons, refrained from quarreling during their honeymoon. Besides, there was a novelty about their situation which acted as a shock absorber for a time. But, the last day at Niagara Falls, they found it irksome to be polite. They cut short the trip and went home.

This ebb tide, after the full moon flow of nuptial excitement, has been all explained by the psychologists. It is a reaction that wears off. So it did in the case of this eugenic pair; and before long they were on speaking terms, as happy couples should be. Then they settled down to be good Bortonians.

It was only after she was married that Sibyl discovered what a monster of perfection this Laughton was. He was absolutely without blemish. She had dared surmise, when they were engaged, that he had some secret sin or disability. It was not so. He did not smoke or use spirituous liquors. He took gymnastic exercises every morning. He never spilled anything on the tablecloth. He never made a bad bargain in business. He infallibly lifted his hat, even to his wife. He could spell all words. His health was perfect. He dressed in the quiet dignity of plain, expensive tailored clothes.

Against this array of matchless attributes Sibyl had only her own perfections to fall back upon. She could do nothing for this man. He needed nothing from any woman. He was complete in himself, so far as any man could be. There was a woman, next door but one, married to a cripple, who had to be wheeled around in a chair. Sibyl used to feast her eyes on this man in the chair, and a great feeling of envy came into her heart. . . . She almost made up her mind once to borrow the cripple for the afternoon, and wheel him around.

Not only did the physical perfection of her husband jar upon Sibyl, but his high mental and moral qualities constantly annoyed her. Ardentlly she began to wish that he might come home drunk. He turned up from the office every evening at five thirty, persistently sober; or, if unavoidably delayed, he always sent a telegram. Another thing that grated: he never failed to post letters. There was something unhuman about the man, Sibyl thought.

She found a letter in his pocket once, signed with a woman's name, but it proved to be a sort of second cousin, who, moreover, was freckled and kept a parrot.

Nor was Sibyl unaware of the fact that her own sterling qualities often palled upon Ernest. She felt that if she tried hard enough she might be able to overcome her perfection—even to the extent of doing something shockingly bad; but she had no enthusiasm for the experiment. As time went on, she began to wonder about Mendel's veracity. . . .

Ernest Laughton came home one evening with a sardonic grin on his handsome face. "Who do you suppose is going to get married?" he asked.

Sibyl didn't want to guess. So Ernest replied to his own question: "Father's chauffeur, Dick O'Malley."

"No!" replied Sibyl, in an astonished way; and yet, when she considered the matter, she realized that Dick was just as likely to get married as anybody else. "To whom?" she asked.

"I think it's a girl named—Higgins, or some name like that. Nobody we know. I tell you, there ought to be a law to prevent people like that from getting married. There's Dick—he hasn't a cent, and no insurance company would take a ten-day risk on him. Father is going to get him a black suit; otherwise he'd have to get married in his driver's costume."

"I suppose other people besides us have human feelings," replied Sibyl, with a slight asperity that Ernest was too preoccupied to observe.

"I know *this*," replied Ernest, "that it's just such people that keep the alms-



house full—and the people pay the taxes.”

“They might spend their money worse,” was Sibyl’s reply; and something in her voice and manner warned the peace loving husband that he was not talking with a taxpayer.

“We’re invited to the wedding,” Ernest continued with a laugh. “Want to go?”

“Of course we’ll go.”

Ernest was genuinely surprised. “You’re joking!”

“Joking? Of course not. Don’t you want to go?”

“Why—yes, if you do. Only I didn’t suppose—”

“We ought to go. It’s only common decency,” was the final word on the subject.

It was so; Dick O’Malley was going to be married. He had decided to take advantage of the fact that all men are created equal. To do this it had become necessary to turn Methodist, but Dick was of an elastic and philosophic disposition. He had more good nature and a larger sense of humor than any other three men in Borton. Miss Wiggin (not Higgins, as Ernest Laughton had said) was the daughter of an unsuccessful butcher, now deceased.

“The wedding was at the home of the bride’s mother. The bride was gowned in a white all-over Hamburg, and carried a bouquet of roses, the single ring service being used.” This quotation was from the Borton *Gazette* of the following Friday.

The “young” Laughtons were present, that is, Sibyl and Ernest. The “old” Laughtons had a previous engagement to remain at home; and were represented by proxy of Dick’s black suit. Dick looked pretty well, sartorially, but not at all well physically. And the bride proved to be a little emaciated, overworked girl that might have been blown away by any high wind.

“They don’t either of them look as though they would last through the year,” whispered Ernest to Sibyl.

“But they look happy,” replied Sibyl. And they did. Dick was full of fun. He even made fun of the minister. And

Millie Wiggin had never in her poor little life had such a draught of joy.

There was no quartet of male voices; but Mrs. Wiggin had a phonograph, nearly paid for, and “many appropriate selections” were played, if we may trust the account in the *Gazette*. One of these was familiar to Ernest and Sibyl. It was “Oh, Perfect Love!”

Sibyl and Ernest went home early, and spent a rather solemn two hours before going to bed. Ernest was wondering how on earth people in such miserable circumstances could show such gaiety; how, in fact, they dared get so much fun out of things in general, and out of a wedding in particular.

“Curious, pinched little creature, isn’t she?” he remarked, referring to the newly made Mrs. O’Malley.

“Yes,” replied Sibyl absently. Then she yawned. Ernest had never in his highest flights of boresomeness seemed quite such a bore as at this moment.

Three years afterward, Sibyl Laughton was walking down Main Street in Borton on a bright, warm Sunday afternoon in June. She was dressed in black, and her only companion was a chow dog of the most approved type. Ernest, not unlike many other highly developed, physically perfect men, had succumbed to typhoid several weeks before. That magnificent constitution, which seemed likely and fit to endure forever, had withered under the first attack. Sibyl was a widow.

At the corner, where she turned to go up her own street, she met a man wheeling a baby carriage, followed closely by a little woman and two children. Deep in thought, Sibyl did not observe these people, and stepped aside to let the baby carriage pass; but a hearty, pleasant voice cried, “Good afternoon, Mrs. Laughton!” and a hat was lifted.

It was Dick O’Malley—with his family. Dick was still driving old man Laughton’s car. Married life had spruced him up; even his beard seemed not so atrociously blue. He was still thin, but his eyes were brighter and healthier in tone.



Mrs. O'Malley's married life had improved her, also. She had taken on more weight, and her cheeks glowed with well-being. Sibyl observed that the two older children were bright little people, and that the infant in the carriage was sucking its thumb in manifest content.

"Why, Dick!" she exclaimed. "What a family man you are, aren't you?"

Dick jammed his thumbs into his waistcoat pockets with honest pride. "I certainly am," he replied. "This is the first time I've seen you, Mrs. Laughton, since—"

"Yes, I haven't been out much of late." She accepted the condolences hastily, and began trying to play with the children. But the children became frightened and held aloof behind their mother's skirts, and when Dick ordered them to play with the lady, they refused. About this time Mrs. O'Malley began to tug gently at Dick's coat sleeve, and

he, interpreting the signal correctly, remarked, "Well, I suppose we must be getting along home."

Sibyl opened her handbag and took a bill from her purse. "For the little folks, you know," she explained.

They went in opposite directions; the O'Malley family of two adults and three young, and Sibyl and the chow dog.

When the parties were out of earshot of each other, Mrs. O'Malley said: "I don't like that woman, Dick."

"Why not?" asked Dick, surprised.

"Didn't I see her making sheep's eyes at you? You can't fool a woman about those things. Maybe you didn't notice it, but I did."

"Pooh!" said Dick. Nevertheless he was not ill pleased. "Well," he added, "anyway, she seems to be pretty fond of children."

But Mrs. O'Malley was not to be appeased. "Let her get some of her own, then," she said.



## THE COUNTRY OF THE YOUNG

By Donn Byrne

ONE of the shee-folk said to me:  
 "It is better to leave, while the heart's unwrung,  
 A world where even the young grow old,  
 And come to a world where the old grow young.  
 For a black frost comes o'er the souls of men  
 And their hearts grow cold as a mist on a fen  
 And sorrowful and grave and lone;  
 And sad, as the rain on a winter's day;  
 And gray as a lichen on a stone.  
 It is better to rise and travel afar  
 With the shee-folk high over wood and wold  
 To the merry land where the shee-folk are;  
 To sing the songs the shee-folk sing;  
 To dance within their magic ring  
 To the tunes their little pipers play;  
 To love their maids; to hear tales told  
 Of how things were ere the world grew old;  
 To sport with queens; to drink brown beer;  
 It is better to be with the shee-folk there  
 Than to stay in a world of cark and care  
 Till the blossomy heart grows withered and sere."



# ST. MADRON AND THE LOVERS

By Eden Phillpotts

WHEN my mother died, father, as had waited very patient till then, made tracks and was never seen no more. He closed her eyes and said, "Thank God, she's a goner!" Then he went to the cupboard and mixed a "Samson," which be a drink of brandy and cider; and then he packed his fardel and took his tools and marched out of Madron forever.

Father was called Thomas Chirgwin, and he'd been a mine captain once, and very well thought upon; but he fell to drink and got lower and lower, till, when mother went, after a cruel bad time of it, he was sunk to day laborer's work on the roads. After he cleared out there wasn't money to pay for burying mother, and but for Uncle William I should have had to go in the work-house; but he came forward then, though I was only a little chap—twelve years old, and no good for naught but keeping crows from corn and such like.

I'd worked at that for him afore, and got a penny a day and my victuals by it, and now, since I was left alone in the world, the man took me over, and I went along to his farm between Madron church town and the moors. "Journey's End" the place was called—a little low house in a parcel o' trees, wi' good tilth round about, though not much of it. 'Twas Uncle William's own, and he'd bought it after fifty years of work, and he was terrible proud of it and of himself for winning it.

Billy Chirgwin was one of them little go-by-the-ground men—a podgy, short and stumpy chap. Red in the face and blue in the eye he was, and he wore his hair in a fringe under his double chin; but his crown was bald and stood up over

his red wrinkled neck and forehead like an egg out of its cup.

A lot of sense he had to him, but he was obstinate, and when he made up his mind 'twas a thing no more to be changed than what happened yesterday. He hated women and had a mistaken fancy they was all after him—for the sake of the farm; so the woman's work at Journey's End was done by married ones. For a long time the head man and his wife, Mrs. Polglaze, lived with Uncle William; but when Tim Polglaze found a job he liked better, of course they went, and the master was in a great quandary what to do. He might have had a score of widdy women, but he mistrusted that sort worst, so at last he tried a fisherman's wife from Newlyn. But she failed him cruel, and drank his spirits and was always asking her husband up to tea. Then uncle sent her packing, and swore by the saints that he wouldn't have no more females about him.

"Us'll do wi'out 'em, and a good rid-dance," he said. "It shall be St. Tibb's Eve afore another petticoat comes here. You've got to learn to cook, Samuel, and the sooner the better."

I never went against nothing he said, and I did my bestest, but I turned out a terrible bafflehead at it, and after uncle had been took bad twice with a feeling like a cannonball in his left side, he saw that cooking wasn't in my way.

"What you do to the meat and puddings I don't know, Samuel," he said to me; "but I want two penn'orth o' peppermint every time I let down a dish you've cooked, and so no doubt 'tis true that only Frenchmen can cook, and Englishmen can't larn it."

Neither of the other two chaps at



Journey's End would take the kitchen work on, and both said that if such belly vengeance food was to be the rule, they'd have to go.

Uncle was a good bit put out, but he saw the reason of it, though he had a slap at me afore he changed his plans.

"I thought you was going to be a useful chap, Samuel," he said to me one morning. "Ess fay, I declared to myself that you would prove a blessing in disguise; but as things are I be like the Mayor of Falmouth—him as gave God the praise when they doubled the size of the jail. You'm a terror, and you'm paying for my kindness by trying to shorten my life."

"Wait till dinner, Uncle William," I said.

I'd made a star-gazing pie for dinner that day, and it promised so well as ever a pie did promise. 'Tis a pie of paste and pilchards, and you bake it wi' the fish poking their noses through the crust. Pretty eating, too; but of course it have got to be handled clever, and I failed again. The dowl knows what I'd done to the pie, but 'twas hard as granite outside, and the fish was raw underneath.

Uncle he got it open, and me and 'tother men looked hopefully upon it; and then uncle dashed down his knife and fork, and shouted out, "Fetch in the bread and cheese, and take this here ondacent mess to the pigs."

'Twas the last straw, you might say, and after all his great speeches in the village and out, Uncle Chirgwin was forced to go back on his word and seek a woman for the farm.

"'Tis a matter of life and death," I heard him say to Mrs. Tresidder at our outer gate the next evening. "'Tis life or death, or I wouldn't do it. But I've lost two teeth out of my false lot—snapped off like stubble in yonder boy's parlous cooking—and my innards be just one everlasting strife, and my sleep's forsaking me. So it have got to end. And if you know a respectable married woman that can handle a bit of bacon and a potato without disgracing herself, you'll do me a kindness to name her."

Mrs. Tresidder thought, and, mother-like, cast her mind over her own first.

She had ten, and the first batch, by her husband, Thomas Cardew—him as was killed in Carn Brea Mine—were all doing well, and the youngest was turned sixteen; but the second lot, by Michael Tresidder, they were only coming on, and the eldest of 'em had reached no more than thirteen at this time. Mrs. Tresidder thought a bit, knowing Uncle William's weakness; then she spoke.

"I suppose, now, as you wouldn't be afeared of a maiden not seventeen year old? I understand very well how 'tis with you, Mr. Chirgwin, and I know the females are cunning toads, and I've always thought you was terrible clever to keep out of their way same as you have done; but there's my darter Cherry—she couldn't have no designs on 'e at her tender age, and what that girl don't know about cooking idden worth knowing. She's the nessel bird of my first husband's family, and a towser for work, and very understanding every way."

"If she ban't seventeen, she wouldn't think to catch a man very near seventy, of course," says Uncle William.

"That she would not. And my advice to you is to give her a trial. Clean as a new pin, Cherry is, and always cheerful and always to work."

"She'll be a gallivanter at her age," said uncle doubtfully. But Mrs. Tresidder pressed it, and sang Cherry Cardew's praises, and added that if she was a failure the girl could easily be sent home again. And so it fell out that she came along to see if she was clever enough to please the master of Journey's End.

But uncle he went to old Mother Trewoof afore he closed with the offer. She was the only woman he ever believed in, and seeing that she was the wisest creature on the countryside, he couldn't choose but do so. A sort of a white witch many called her, and for certain she knowed a cruel lot of strange things. But her advice was run after, and she was very large-minded, and didn't care a pin whether you took it or left it, so long as you paid her fee.

Mother Trewoof said no harm could come of trying Cherry Cardew; and so Cherry came, and it idden too much to



say that she managed all us men from the first. Such wits no young thing ever had afore; and as for cooking, Uncle William found hisself unwell again after she'd been in the house three days; but this time he said that 'twas only a testament to the girl's skill, because the food was so proper, he'd ate far too much of it.

So she stayed, and much came of that. Cherry was tall and straight and slim to look at, but she had dear little womanly rounds about her, and a womanly smallness of hands and feet. She wore a pink print workdays, and had a very fine blue gown when she went out. Her eyes were large and so gray as glass, but she kept her eyelids down over 'em a lot, and her lashes spread out in a very pretty fashion. She had a nubby nose and a lovely color to her cheeks. And her mouth was large but a lovely shape. She'd a regular stack of corn-colored hair, as she wore piled up top of her head; and she was always cheerful and willing.

But she kept to herself a good bit, and you couldn't tell she was in the house half the day but for her singing. Uncle was troubled about the singing at first, but he put up with it, for he soon found out his luck and didn't want to do nothing to drive the girl away.

And then, after she'd been along with us nine or ten months and drawing six pound a year for it, a terrible queer thing happened to me.

I was up eighteen old by now—a great, hulkin' chap over six foot, and terrible strong; and me and a good few others was wont to meet of a Sunday nigh Madron church, and smoke and air our opinions and watch the passers-by. It happened one afternoon, as I stood there along with half a score of others, that Peter Noy, from Gilval, was amongst us, and he made a scornful speech in my hearing. A terrible chap for the maidens he was—had a sort of bullying, God Almighty way with him they couldn't stand against. Like spaniels they bore themselves afore him, though whatever they saw in the red-headed creature none of us other men could guess.

"Who be that wench wi' the green eyes?" suddenly asked Peter.

'Twas Cherry, and her mother, Mrs. Tresidder, had just gone in to worship, along with her and three or four children.

He couldn't have meant no girl else, so I answered him.

"'Tis Miss Cherry Cardew," I said, "and her eyes ban't no more green than your hair."

"So green as a leaf," he answered. "If I don't know what color a girl's eyes be, 'tis pity."

"You'm a liard, Peter Noy," I said.

Well, he was an upstanding chap, a good few year older than me, and a bit heavier, though not so tall. He didn't know how terrible strong I was, or he might have thought again; but when I told him plump out that he was a liard, he didn't much like it, and come over and put his face within an inch of mine.

"You say that again, and I'll drop you in the ditch," says Peter.

"Come up to the wood, and you shall hear it again so oft as you like to hear it," I answered him.

So we made a move up over, where Madron woods come to the tilth, and seven or eight of us went in a nice thicket out of harm's way; and then I told the man he was a liard, and a silly fool in the bargain, if he didn't know the difference betwixt gray and green.

With that we took off our coats and waistcoats and our Sunday collars and ties. I was for fighting, but Peter said the case didn't call for that, and he was going to wrastle; and 'twas all one to me, for I could do either.

We cockled up to each other, and I gave him a Cornish hug that bent in his ribs a bit; and afore he knowed we was beginning, the man found hisself on his back in the thorns. Thrice I felled him, and then he shook hands very friendly, and I did the same; and we was good companions ever after, and no harm done; and he finished by saying that the girl's eyes might be any color I pleased and be damned to her. So we left it at that, and the job wouldn't have been worth mentioning but for one thing. It told me a wonnerful queer bit of news.

I said to myself, going home that



evening: "If you can get sparring over a thing like that, Sam Chirgwin, and if you care whether a maiden's eyes be green or gray, there's something in it." And then it comed over me, like a flash of lightning, that I cared for Cherry. I'd felt a sort of uneasy hankering to put my arms around her and squeeze her for six months very near; but she wasn't that sort, and I knowed it. Then, with time, I'd growed to feel different, and now I'd no more have dared to touch her than strike her. "You'd best put such foolery out of yur head," I told myself. And I tried, but I couldn't do it.

Besides, she changed herself at this time. Some chap—Freddy Lanine, I think 'twas—told her about my fun with Peter Noy, and the reason for it—and it appeared to vex her something terrible, for she growed all woman in a day, and cold-shouldered me as if I'd done a wicked act. I thought at first that Peter Noy had catched her, but 'twasn't that. She knowed all about him, and said she'd rather go to the grave a maiden than have anything to do with a carrot-headed man.

So times was changed, and I soon knowed I loved her furious. My eyes watered afore her, and my mouth, too, for that matter. She was a bowerly piece, and of course I weren't the only one by many. But she went her way, as if there weren't a man in the world, and come her day out, to her mother she always would go.

Then I took my courage, after a sweaty night o' fear, and axed her, in so many words, if she'd go for a walk some evening. She looked sideways under them little lovely frills of eyelash, and said she'd think of it, and I noticed when I talked to her now that my voice was all over the shop. Two days later I axed her again, and she said she'd come; and she did come. 'Twas the dimpsy of a summer evening, and we went up over past St. Madron's well and chapel on the hill. We walked out in the moor presently, and pitched on a stone and watched the light fade out of the sky. 'Twas still and fine, and the engine stack of Wheal Carn looked so black as ink against the sunset, and the airy

mice was winging and squeaking very lively along the edge of the woods.

Yet, try as I might, I couldn't find nothing to tell about.

'Twas a very silent walk, in fact, but I kept looking upon her a lot, and for the most part she held her eyes to the ground.

"That's a terrible big dew snail," I said once, pointing to a great black creature crawling over the grass.

"So 'tis, then," she answered.

"You don't sing about the house so much as you did use," I said again, ten minutes later.

"Don't I?" she asked.

"No," I answered; "you do not."

But nothing came of it.

Then I had a slap at another subject. "The evening star be wonnerful bright," I said.

"Not brighter than usual," thought Cherry. But I declared that it was, and she wouldn't argue about it, and allowed I might be in the right. Then I had a happy idea, and asked her why for she was called Cherry, and she said: "I idden. My true name's Charity. But Mr. Tresidder took a great dislike to it—him being a Socialist—and 'twas him as ordained to change it."

This was a bit of news to me, and I sat and thought upon the point for a half-hour, I daresay. Then, far off, us heard Madron church clock tell nine.

"'Tis time we was gwaine back along," I said.

Presently a night bird began hollering, and another answered it, and I told Cherry 'twas owls, but she thought 'twas more like crying children. I made some joke then about the pispies and the spriggans; but she grew comical-tempered in a minute, and I found that she took all such matters very serious.

"You don't mean for to say you believe in the little people?" I asked her, and she told me to mind my own business. It promised to spoil the end of the walk, but she forgived me afore we'd got home, though not till I apologized very humble.

I said: "I'm a known-naught fool, Cherry, and I dare say there's millions of fairies in Cornwall yet, and why not?"



And I'm sure you be so wonnerful as a fairy yourself, for that matter."

I felt that was pretty smart, and she liked it, too, and said as none could prove there wasn't fairies, while a lot of very clever people knowed for certain that there was. Her own father had heard the spriggans knocking in the mine two days afore he was killed, and her grandfather had been pisgey-led two different times in his life, and could swear to it on the book.

I said as the walk had done me a power of good, and made so bold as to hope she'd come up over and pitch on thicky stone again sometime; and she said that if us had such another fine evening, she didn't know but what she might.

At daydown a week later we went again, and I had terrible poor speed. They say that "perfect love casteth out fear," but mine didn't. I was a strong, hulking giant of a man, and could face anything on four legs, or anything on two, for that matter—anything but Cherry.

I don't know what 'twas, but I was dumb as a quilkin when along with her, and yet right down miserable when out of her sight. I felt it couldn't go on, and yet something told me to try and please her, and I toiled to do it; and sometimes I got a smile and a kind word, and sometimes she growed that short and impatient with me that I felt any minute she might slap my face.

'Twas an up-and-down sort of time, and I very near ran away once or twice, for the strain was cruel. Now and then I'd get forwarder, and then all the good was done away; and now and then I'd almost feel bold enough to speak and offer for her; but that was generally of a night, and when the morning come my spirit was gone.

She was that uncertain. She'd do terrible kind things one day, and cut me to the heart the next. And then she went out twice along with Johnny Vingoe, and I felt things was at a climax.

Uncle William got a tissick on the chest about then—'twas springtime again—and he wanted to see Mother Trewoof for it, and she comed in one

evening and looked at the man. In her clever way she'd guessed what was amiss with him afore she saw him, and she brought along marjoram and elder and a few suchlike herbs to make a valiant drink. And seeing what 'twas, she bade Cherry hot the kettle and fetch a saucepan.

Then she began to make the physic, and while she made it, she talked.

Uncle, he crouched a-gurglin' and chockin' in his dog-eared chair one side the fire; Mother Trewoof, she knelt at the hearth and stirred; Cherry sat by the table, darning socks, and I was not far off, making rabbit nets—a job at which I was pretty spry. T'other men weren't in, and us sat there silent as mice but for uncle's wheezin', and listened to Mother Trewoof.

Cruel fine talk 'twas. Few were the hidden things that woman didn't know, and she was terrible vexed with life as it was, and much wished us could all go back to life as it used to be.

"Along of these here fansical schools," she said, "the children doan't believe in nothing at all, and the old ripe wisdom of us ancient folk be dust in the balance to 'em. As if we didn't know, and hadn't seen with our eyes, and our forefathers afore us! Take charms, for instance. Who can cure wildfire, or burning, or toothache like I can? Who can staunch blood so quick as me? Yet, where fifty in a year was wont to come to me for such service, five don't now. And look at the holy stones up over—the stone with a hole in un, called the crickstone, and the written stone, and other sacred and magic things—all idle—all idle. Who visits the crickstone now? Who goes there for lumbagey or rheumatism, or other cricks, and crawls through the hole again and again against the way of the sun? What mothers take their babes there to make 'em strong and lusty? Yet well I know the hidden vartue, and have proved it a thousand times."

"We'm forgetting the clever things our fathers did. 'Pears as if the world was to be saved by electricity nowadays," said Uncle William. Then he coughed fit to die.



"Doan't you be talking; list to me," answered Mother Trewoof. "As for electricity, a time will come when us shall pray to our God to take it away again. 'Tis playing with lightning at best, and the devil's weapon in my opinion. Didn't the saints know? When the holy men comed hither in a boatload from Ireland, 'twasn't electricity they brought, but the power of God and the trick of doing miracles in the Name. They didn't quarrel with nobody. They let the conjurors and white witches and small people alone, and them as wanted the light of Christianity was welcome to it, and them as didn't could go their own dark way, so long as they had no truck with God's chosen. But 'tis all gone now—swept away by these blasted board schools and city bred teachers, as have no faith in nothing but themselves and machinery."

She poured the herby tea in a basin, and told Cherry to set it upon the window sill to cool.

"The saints done a power of good, no doubt," said my uncle.

"Iss fay; and would again tomorrow, if anybody had the faith to trust 'em," answered the old woman. "Take our own—take St. Madron—us don't want to go not a step further for healing wonders. Yet who tramps up along to his chapel now? Who dips there in the running water—once blessed, always blessed? Who bathes there for the thing their heart wanteth, and calls to the listening saint for it, and then goeth home rejoicing?"

"Not a soul," admitted Uncle William. "Yet, when I was a young man, 'twas a deed not seldom practised, and many a mother dipped her babby in the old font, and left a rag hanging in the thorn tree over the altar stone. I can mind so many as twenty rags dancing there to a time; and the birds would come and pluck at 'em for their nests."

"The magic be there," declared Mother Trewoof. "The good belongs to the water for evermore, and that's why it don't run dry in the hottest summer, like other common streams. 'Tis blessed, and it ban't the saint's fault, nor yet mine, that the people

don't make use of it. But there 'tis, with all its vartue running to waste, year after year. All I know is this: I wouldn't be without a bottle in my house for untold gold."

Uncle said 'twas meat and drink to him to hear tell such things, and I stole a look at Cherry to see what she thought; but she was darning for dear life, and didn't 'pear to be interested. And I was glad of it, because there had come in my head a dashing thought. I stared at her; but my mind was lifting far beyond Journey's End and the people in it. I felt a wonnerful call. I felt so strong as a team of horses. 'Twas borne in upon me, like the light was borne in on Paul, that this here St. Madron might be the very man for my business. And I said to myself: "If a wise woman, like this here, and a wise man, like uncle, can believe in the holy saint, what right have a silly like me to dare to doubt?"

And then I cast my eyes upon Cherry again, wi' her hair bright as gold in the cannell light, and her head standing out like a picksher against the old cloam and butter prints and glass and the like on the dresser behind her. Mother Trewoof talked a bit more; then she had a drink of uncle's spirits, and he had a dose of her physic, and the night ended.

But sleep wouldn't come to me, and I was already thirstin' for the light of day, being full of St. Madron and his chapel and his well. 'Twas my resolve at dawn to be up over and get in the ruin, and dip for luck, and call upon the saint with all my might to give me what I wanted—in the shape of Cherry Cardew. I knowed very well 'twas time I axed, and yet the awful fear of getting a frosty answer had held me back. But somehow, after hearing Mother Trewoof, I burned wi' strength and resolution, and did believe most steadfast that the saint would give heed. I argued long with myself upon it, too. I weren't asking the holy man for no impossibilities. For instance, if Cherry had been tokened to any other chap, I wouldn't have done it; but, for all I knowed to the contrary, she was heart whole and free as air; and I felt that



if she had secrets about Johnny Vingoe, then, be it as it would, 'twas time I knowed 'em. For one thing had got to be deathly sure in my mind, and that was, if I couldn't get Cherry, I should have to sling my hook beyond sight and sound of her.

At peep o' day I was sleeping like a pig, and didn't wake till nearly four o'clock. But I got in my clothes very quick, and was soon away to St. Madron's chapel—a lonesome place 'pon the moor edge, a mile from Journey's End.

Up I went through a strong easterly breeze, and the spring was in the air and green things breaking out of the dead gray ones under my feet and all round about. An early lark had gone aloft to catch the first sunlight, and he'd caught it, and hung, like a spark o' fire, far up in the blue, pouring his heart out. So I came to the holy well and ruined chapel. 'Tis a queer little broken-down spot, wi' walls no higher than a man's shoulder and stone seats running inside. Briers and grass and moss be over all, and above the altar stone there standeth a great whitethorn, girt with an ivytod. Furze and heather bind the ruin together; the stone floor is broken up with green grass and daisies, and on the altar be a hole that had caught rain from the last shower and flashed back the brightness of the sky.

St. Madron's stream ran behind, aglint and full of noise, and the wild parsley was budding inside it and the forget-me-nots twinkling blue above the water, and the furze towering up in a bank of gold above. And as I came here, at the first red sunrise light, I was struck into terror, for upon the altar stone I saw clothes, and a woman's white smicket and a pair of shoon and stockings. Then, bending down, I peered out through a hole in the wall, and my knees knocked and I went bivvering over with cold, as though I'd been struck with frost.

For there was Cherry, just rising out of St. Madron's stream. Her hair was blowing round her, like the merry dancers, and the morning light touched it, and she herself flashed through it,

white as curds. That's all I knowed, for I went so weak as a goose chick afore that wonnerful sight, because I'd never seen a girl unrayed in all my life afore, and 'tis a most amazing thing. I dropped then, as if I'd been shot, and crawled off, and she come to the altar stone, and I heard her singing like a graybird, and getting back in her clothes. I didn't dare to move, but hid in a brake, close by outside the chapel, till she was off and away. I lie there thinking and wondering and sweating with jealousy, for somehow I guessed very well she was come to pray to the saint; and what her prayer had been about I'd have give ten year off my life to know.

Presently I crept forth and looked around. She'd left a rag of her dress on the whitethorn tree, and 'twas fluttering there on the wind; and in the sand by the stream I found a clear print of her foot—five little toes and heel; and such was my frantic state that I knelt down and kissed it!

Somehow I couldn't go home again. My tongue was dry as a chip, and I drank a drop of St. Madron's brook; then wandered about an hour and more, and then I went home along. But I turned against breakfast, and the thought of seeing Cherry put me in a regular tear, so I just went to the stable and fetched out a hoss and marched off to my morning's work. 'Twas harrowing, I remember, and hour after hour I followed the machine, and felt as if the tines was running over me instead of the earth; and yet, somehow, I knowed myself to be a long sight more of a man than ever I had been until that morning.

'Twas the first and last time in my life as I didn't know what 'twas to be hungry at noon. But I didn't, and when I saw Cherry clambering up over the field wi' a frail, I very near jumped over the hedge and ran for it.

But the man in me had done with that nonsense, thank God, and I stood my ground, so stiff as a stake, and said to myself: "I'll ax her, or die!"

In a minute she was there, cool and cheerful; and she soon oped the basket



and fetched out a pasty and my little wood runlet, as I kept for cider.

"Why for didn't you come to break-sis?" she says. "What a timdoodle of a chap you be!"

"I know that very well," I answers her. "But there was a reason."

"I've brought 'e dinner."

"And cruel kind of you to bring it."

She was going then, but I nerved myself, and begged her if she'd be so kind as to bide while I ate it.

She didn't seem much astonished at the idea, and I gave his nosebag to the hoss, and spread my coat for Cherry on the lee side of a hedge, and us sat down together.

I knowed if I once began talking on general subjects my courage would fade, so I dashed head first into it, afore I had time to quail, and I said:

"Look here, Cherry, I'm very near out of my seven senses about you, and I love you like a burning fire, and there 'tis. Will 'e keep company and be Cherry Chirgwin presently? And if you don't—if you don't, God's my judge but I'll jump down a mine, for I can't live without 'e, and wouldn't if I could!"

'Twas out; and, once out, I felt so brave as a leash o' lions and stared straight in her face, and felt my arms tingling to be round her.

She flickered up till her cheeks was so red as herb Robert, and gave me one precious look, and then her eyes went

down and her lovely little head went down, too.

"I knowed you'd ax me today, Sam," she said in a small voice. "Yes, I very well knowed you would come to it today."

"And what do 'e say to me?"

"I love you—I love you—I love you!"

Three times she spoke it, and would have said it a fourth, but she hadn't no more time, for I was on her like a tiger.

"'Tis all St. Madron," she said, when I let her draw breath; and then she confessed that she'd been up to the chapel and called upon the holy man to give me a helping hand.

I made as if I was terrible astonished; and that night I put it afore Uncle William very crafty.

"She'm wife old," I said, "and you well remember you always wanted a married woman to look after you, so 'twill fit in all right. And you know better than I can tell that you wouldn't be without Cherry for the world, nor yet without me, so there it lies."

He hadn't got much kick in him just then, along of the tissick in his chest. Therefore he soon gave in about it.

And six months later me an' Cherry was wedded to the Wesleyan chapel, though, as she said, she'd far sooner have had it done up to St. Madron's.

Never a word of the great adventure did she hear till our marriage night; and then I told her; but it didn't shake her faith in the saint, nor yet in me.



FORESTER—How did you come to marry your wife?

LANCASTER—Oh, she seemed to take a dislike to me when we first met, and I wanted to show her she was mistaken.



FOR the trivial things of life a woman employs her lips to speak, but in matters of real importance she trusts her eyes alone.



LOVE is the only thing in the world that is at once a necessity and a luxury.



# THE TWELVE FORTY-FIVE

By Joyce Kilmer

WITHIN the Jersey City shed  
The engine coughs and shakes its head.  
The smoke, a plume of red and white,  
Waves madly in the face of night.  
And now the grave, unconscious stars  
Shine on the groaning, hurrying cars.  
Against the kind and awful reign  
Of darkness, this our angry train,  
A noisy little rebel, pouts  
Its brief defiance; flames and shouts  
And passes on . . . and leaves no trace.  
For darkness holds its ancient place,  
Serene and absolute, the king  
Unchanged, of every living thing.  
The houses lie obscure and still  
In Rutherford and Carlton Hill.  
Our lamps intensify the dark  
Of slumbering Passaic Park.  
And quiet holds the weary feet  
That daily tramp through Prospect Street.  
What if we clank and clang and roar  
Through all Passaic's streets? No door  
Will open: not an eye will see  
Who this loud vagabond may be.  
Upon my crimson-cushioned seat,  
In manufactured light and heat,  
I feel unnatural and mean.  
Outside the towns are cool and clean;  
Curtained awhile from sound and sight  
They take God's gracious gift of night.  
The stars are watchful over them.  
On Clifton, as on Bethlehem,  
The angels, leaning from the sky,  
Shed peace and gentle dreams. And I—  
I ride, I blasphemously ride  
Through all the silent countryside.  
The engine's shriek, the headlight's glare  
Pollute the still nocturnal air.  
The cottages of Lake View sigh,  
And, sleeping, frown as we pass by.  
Why, even strident Paterson  
Rests quietly as any nun;



Her foolish warring children keep  
 The grateful armistice of sleep.  
 For what tremendous errand's sake  
 Are we so blatantly awake?  
 What precious secret is our freight?  
 What king must be abroad so late?  
 Perhaps Death roams the earth tonight  
 And we rush forth to give him fight.  
 Or else, perhaps, we speed his way  
 To some remote, unthinking prey.  
 Perhaps a woman writhes in pain  
 And listens . . . listens for the train,  
 The train—that like an angel sings;  
 The train—with healing on its wings.  
 Now "Hawthorne!" the conductor cries.  
 My neighbor starts and rubs his eyes.  
 He hurries, yawning, through the car  
 And steps out where the houses are.  
 This is the reason for our quest!  
 Not wantonly we break the rest  
 Of town and village, nor do we  
 Lightly profane night's sanctity.  
 What Love commands, the train fulfils,  
 And beautiful upon the hills  
 Are these our feet of burnished steel.  
 Subtly and certainly, I feel  
 That Glen Rock welcomes us to her  
 And silent Ridgewood seems to stir  
 And smile, because she knows the train  
 Has brought her children back again.  
 We carry people home—and so  
 God speeds us, wheresoe'er we go.  
 Hohokus, Waldwick, Allendale  
 Lift sleepy heads to bid us hail.  
 In Ramsey, Mahwah, Suffern, stand  
 Houses that wistfully demand  
 A father—son—some human thing  
 That this, the midnight train, may bring.  
 The trains that travel in the day  
 They carry folk to work or play.  
 The midnight train is slow and old  
 But of it let this thing be told,  
 To its high honor be it said,  
 It carries weary folk to bed.  
 My cottage lamp shines white and clear.  
 God bless the train that brought me here!



THE original grape nut—Omar Khayyám.



# THE AFTER-DINNER SPEAKER

By Lewis Allen

## CHARACTERS

THE SPEAKER	A LOVER
THE TOASTMASTER	A DEAF MAN
THE GUEST OF HONOR	A MAN WHO DROPPED IN BY ACCIDENT
A WAITER	A CLERGYMAN
A GRAFTER	A DOCTOR
A HENPECKED HUSBAND	A LAWYER
A NEWLYWED	A MAN WITH ST. VITUS'S DANCE
A DYSPEPTIC	A JANITOR
THREE HUNDRED AND NINETY OTHER SUFFERING GUESTS	

TIME: *Nearly midnight.*

PLACE: *Any city.*

**S**CENE—The average banquet hall after the average toastmaster has introduced the average after-dinner speaker at the close of the average dinner of the average society for something or other.

The curtain discovers the SPEAKER standing, talking eloquently, on the left of the TOASTMASTER; the GUEST OF HONOR is at the TOASTMASTER's right. Some of the guests are asleep. Some are knocking cigar ashes on the table linen and tracing figures in it. The SPEAKER has been talking for eighty-seven minutes and appears to be about in the middle of his speech.

Every character in this little tragedy *thinks* his part—no word is spoken by anyone, except the SPEAKER on the floor, whose words are never of importance, and so they are not included in this play.

GUEST (*thirsty*)—Five minutes more of that dry speech, and my throat will shrivel up and choke me to death.

CLERGYMAN (*thinking of next Sunday's sermon*)—And thirdly I will draw the parable of the talents. . . . Dear me, how the speaker annoys my train of thought!

WAITER—For th' love of Mike! I won't git home till daylight.

A SLEEPING GUEST (*clutching at the tablecloth*)—Ugh! (*He awakens.*) Whew! I dreamed I was going over Niagara Falls!

GUEST (*trying not to hear*)—I'd give a dollar for a couple of wads of cotton to jab in my ears.

GRAFTER—Hang it all, why don't he talk more about our company?

LOVER—Curses! I just know that other fellow is with Mabel.

TOASTMASTER—Will they ever forgive me for introducing that bore?



MAN WITH ST. VITUS'S DANCE—If he don't stop those fool gestures I'll twitch my blamed face clean off.

JANITOR (*passing the open door of the dining hall*)—Praise th' saints, I don't hafter be listenin' to that chump's drool.

ANOTHER GUEST (*looking at his watch*)—Ye gods! My train goes in eight minutes!

GUEST OF HONOR—Now I wonder what he's talking about?

ANOTHER GUEST—Of all the punk stuff I ever heard, this is the limit.

STILL ANOTHER—No head nor tail nor sense nor brains nor anything except fool words to this speech.

LAWYER—What rot!

ANOTHER THIRSTY GUEST—My tongue is three feet thick. If he says anything again about the "right spirit" I'll drink up the vinegar.

TOASTMASTER (*looking at one of the sleeping guests*)—The lucky dog!

DYSPEPTIC—If I'd known I had to listen to this I'd have eaten everything in sight and died happy with cramps.

(*The SPEAKER here assures the guests that he wants to say only "one word more." A few who are not used to after-dinner speakers smile happily at this, but the old-timers settle back in their chairs and give up utterly to despondency.*)

DOCTOR—Why didn't I think and have a fake call sent in for me at ten thirty?

DEAF MAN—Praise heaven, I can't hear a word he says.

MAN WHO DROPPED IN BY ACCIDENT—If I'd known this guy was speaking, I wouldn't have come in here to collect that fifty from Smith if I never got it.

NEWLYWED—By jiminy! What on earth do you suppose Clara will think? I promised to be home at eleven. Oh, she'll never forgive me.

(*One of the twelve sleeping guests falls out of his chair, whereupon nine others assist him merely as an excuse for getting out.*)

GUEST OF HONOR—Blamed if he even knows I'm the guest of honor—he hasn't mentioned my name.

GRAFTER—I should have got more than a fifty-dollar rake-off from the caterer on this feed.

ANOTHER GUEST (*trying not to hear*)—Let me see: the interest will amount to a hundred and fifty a year and the repairs will cost about eleven hundred and—Darn that speaker! What's he want to shout like that for?

CLERGYMAN (*composing his sermon*)—"And so, my brethren, let us learn from the beasts of the field, from the flowers by the wayside, from the—" I shall lose my temper in a minute if that speaker yells again and disturbs me.

(*The DYSPEPTIC totters to his feet. The DOCTOR rushes to his side.*)

DOCTOR (*as he helps the DYSPEPTIC out of the hall*)—What luck! I thought I'd never get an excuse to get out of this.



TOASTMASTER (*while the SPEAKER is referring to him*)—I'll bet I can paper my front hall just as well as the paper hanger, and save about eleven dollars on it.

LAWYER—If my wife ever sees that new stenographer—

HENPECKED MAN—Martha will just about kill me for this!

DEAF MAN—I'll never rail against Providence again for making me deaf. When I look at the misery on these faces about me, I begin to appreciate the blessings of deafness.

LOVER—I simply *must* break away and see Mabel—telephone her or something. I could murder this boob!

WAITER (*starting for the kitchen*)—By thunder, I'll phone the boss and throw up the job before I'll stand here and listen to this dope another minute.

(*The WAITER goes out, tearing his hair. Three men take out their watches; this is observed by eleven other men, who do likewise.*)

LAWYER—If I get into the legislature this fall, I'll introduce a bill limiting after-dinner speeches to three hours or less.

(*One listener looks at a timetable he has taken from his pocket, and runs out on tiptoe.*)

GUEST OF HONOR—Just my rotten luck. If I weren't a guest of honor I could sneak out.

(*One man, trying not to hear, fills his ears with bread crumbs.*)

CLERGYMAN—Dear—dear—dear me! I almost could wish someone was dying or something so someone could send and get me out of this.

(*One thirsty man catches the eye of another thirsty man and makes a sign of crooking his elbow, whereupon both jump up and dash madly through the door.*)

ANOTHER GUEST—If I can get that lumber for eight cents a foot I'll— Oh, what's the use? I can't think.

JANITOR—For foive cints I'd tur-r-rn off th' lights.

GRAFTER—Everybody's getting worn out. Now's the time to make them sign for stock in my dairy company, just to get rid of me.

CLERGYMAN—Lord, give Thy servant patience!

(*Eight listeners tiptoe out, one after the other.*)

LAWYER—If any man here will murder this talker I'll guarantee to get him off free—yes, I might even get him a pension.

GUEST OF HONOR—Suffering eardrums, will someone shoot this fellow and put him out of his misery—or blow out the gas and put *us* out of *our* misery?

(*At this point the SPEAKER closes his address, of one hundred and sixty-four minutes' duration, bows and sits down. The listeners cheer wildly.*)

TOASTMASTER—I move we adjourn.

EVERY MAN IN THE HALL—*Second the motion!*

(*They make a mad rush for the doors.*)



# M-I-L-E-S-T-O-N-E-S

By Edmund Vance Cooke

WHEN your golf is getting stronger and your tennis getting tame,  
When you'd rather guy the umpire than get out and play the game  
When you're feeling over-friendly to your rival in the race,  
When you'd rather rest in comfort than be practising the pace,  
When your inner impulse whispers "Halt," where once it shouted "Go!"  
When you'd rather read beside the grate than revel in the snow,  
These are m-i-l-e-s-t-o-n-e-s toward the ending of the row.

When your barber's conversation is of eau-de-hair-restorer,  
When you're less inclined to Bergson than you are to Mrs. Rorer,  
When your life insurance broker finds you dumb as he discloses  
Your many bills for funeral wreaths, your few for bridal roses,  
When you'd rather see the sunrise *à la* lantern at the show  
Than to climb a morn'g mountain for the early eastern glow,  
These are m-i-l-e-s-t-o-n-e-s toward the ending of the row.

When the man you met but yesterday is he you do not know,  
But you instantly recall the face of forty years ago;  
When you'd rather take a taxi than to take a half-mile breather  
And you'd just a little rather take a pousse café than either,  
When the everlasting struggle for the neverlasting dough  
Makes you sigh to buy a fruit farm just to watch the apples grow,  
These are m-i-l-e-s-t-o-n-e-s toward the ending of the row.



A CONSERVATIVE is one who worships dead revolutionists and persecutes living ones.



FOR some persons the call of the future is so loud that they cannot hear the present passing.



AFTERTHOUGHT—Worse than no thought.



# THE MUD DEVIL OF NIGGER HILL

By Walter S. Kerr

THE other placer miners in '49 soon called him "Nutmeg Bill" of the Green Devil claim on Nigger Hill. Of all the two hundred and fifty shafts and tunnels powder-nosed into that fabulous mine nest in the early fifties, Nutmeg's tunnel was the longest and flintiest-boned. The claim itself was at the very foot of the channeled hill, the most uncertain for mine rewards, and the smallest there. Yet it had one distinction that no other had: its rim rock bore went through an intrusive dyke of serpentine from daylight to gravel, a long tunnel as tensely green as a heron's egg.

Nutmeg had been grubstaked by French Antoinette, of the Eldorado dance hall, on the north side of the Frisco plaza, and her flying feet, her charms and her wiles had been worth nine thousand dollars to Nutmeg Bill. And to all of the miners it was incomprehensible that a man with the manners of a bear and as ugly as a camel was not only her partner but her lover as well. Not a gambler nor miner but agreed without argument that Antoinette, though beautiful and unaccountably chaste, was as big a mining fool as Nutmeg himself.

The hill had been riddled and robbed, and nearly every one of its adventurers from all parts of the earth had gone, but with bulldog tenacity and senseless purpose Nutmeg, growing sourer and more hateful to his Chinese help, had kept on his two years' foolish quest for pay gravel. That day he had put in his last and largest powder charge. He was compelled to quit, for he had no more money to buy powder or grub or to pay his miners.

After that last eruption the help were waiting at the entrance for the fumes to clear. Nutmeg Bill was just reading a seven-day-old letter from Antoinette that brought a stricken light to his face.

It's the last cent I will send you. You have been a fool from the first. I told you the green devils would get you sooner or later. A nine-thousand-dollar dry hole with a fool at each end of it, you and me. Shorty Longlaigs, just come in, says you have missed the gravel bed entirely, and are running from rim to rim or maybe along it. And Shorty is a *miner* and has made his pile. He has more sense than to dig in a pile of rocks for two years. He says you won't get a thimbleful of gravel. I guess you'd better go off and go to gophering in a sand bank somewhere. Doesn't cost so much. You got a nice green hole to whistle in. Well, you dance in it now. I will whistle for my money, but not for you any more. I will not send you another cent. Good-bye.

Before the smoke had cleared he said to his Chinese foreman, one-eared Charlie, as he stuck the letter into his pocket and gazed unseeingly down into the dark canyon: "Might as well go in an' pick it down, boys. Git your candles; set 'em straight so's you won't waste the taller. 'Spect the smoke ain't stinkin' too much."

As they prepared to enter, he impartially damned his luck and his Antoinette, and his little ganderish blue eyes almost closed as he thought of Shorty Longlaigs. The helpers eyed him covertly, astonished that their boss's face should turn so suddenly bluish, hard and drawn.

"Thlmoke plutty thlwick, Mutmek, how?" and Charlie coughed stranglingly in the vile air.

"Parfumery fer pigtails," snarled the boss.

The first glance told the tale.



"Git a pan, Charlie—git a pan. Whoop! Run fer your life!" yelled Nutmeg, as he came in the blue end of the long tunnel. Later, as he excitedly clawed the prospect pan full of muck, his last clutch pulled over a nugget as large as an acorn. He paused, trembling violently as he held the nugget secreted under his big bony hand. Shutting his eyes as he shook, he slyly moved it down. Then Nutmeg bent his lean, grisly, twitching face on his knees and burst into a bovine bellow a minute long.

"Huttle, Blill? How?" asked Charlie.

"Hurt? Hur-r-t? No-o. Just bust-in—that's all. Hooray, fer the Green Devil! Come out to the hole." Amazed they cluttered after Nutmeg to the test pan waterhole at the end of the tunnel. He slammingly sat down and sank the painful of gravel under the water, gulped repressively, filled his pipe, his breast heaving as he tried to recover his calm.

"Wha' d'you 'spect's in that pan, Charlie, huh?" he asked, trying to appear unconcerned. "Mebby three colors; mebbby nuggets big as acorns; mebbby gray sand an' mebbby a tetch o' black sand with flour gol' at the bottom. Nine thousan' dollars in that hole; nothin' to show, mebbby, fer two years' nuggerin'!"

"An' nobody nowhere is agoin' to sen' another cent fer us. Mebbby the green devils has got us sure! 'Spect I ought to be gopherin' in a san' bank some'ers, huh? D'you Chinks hear any whistlin' roun' in this here neck o' woods, heh?"

The Chinese whined like dogs in their anxiety and gazed about them uneasily.

"Bout a year ago"—he talked to the gorges below—"the boys come along an' says: 'Nutmaig, when d'you 'spect to reach yer gravel?'"

"'Damfino,' says I, quick as a flash.

"Then last spring early Shorty Longlaigs, he comes snakin' 'long agin. Then he says: 'Nuttty'—he said 'Nuttty' sure—'Nuttty, what d'you expect to git out yer thimbleful o' gravel—*pervidin'* you reach it?'"

"Then I went off like a trigger:

'Damfino, Shorty. Mebbby rails er snails er p'raps puppydogs' tails.' 'Nen he says: 'I knows people as git purty peert w'en diggin' fer fishworms.' 'Nen he mozeys off, twistin' his terbacker like a hog eatin' new corn.

"'Nen 'bout two weeks sence here he comes snakin' 'long agin packed fer Sutter's. He jus' rolls his terbacker out'n his jaws into his front teeth like he always does when he begins to cod a feller. So he says, tryin' to be sociable:

"'I see yer peggin' away, Nutmaig, peggin' away. All the boys 'cept two air diggin' in fat gravel some'ers, er blowin' in their dust at Frisco. I see yer peggin' on.' I says not a word but kind o' looked sociable, poundin' a drill. That made him brazen up, me not sayin' nothin'.

"'I 'spect mebbby you'll git three er four hundred acres on the p'int o' yer Green Devil's nose, heh, Charlie?' You knowed a danged site better'n to laugh, Charlie, you heathen!" He turned around and punched his foreman joyfully in the ribs. Charlie grunted with pain but tried to laugh. Then Nutmeg was lost in reverie again.

"'I ain't a-blamin' nothin' er nobody, Nutmaig, but I wouldn't be s'prised ef you foun' yerself a-runnin' 'long the rim stead o' across it, heh?' Was I mad, though? Then he hitched his pants up; I can see him throwin' his cud in his teeth yit. 'Spect a thimbleful o' dust, Nuttymaigy?'" Nutmeg whirled around to Charlie.

"'Nuttymaigy!' Whar-r-r! What did I spit at 'im, spit it at 'im like a cat, Charlie?" He looked so fierce that the foreman, looking frightened, ventured:

"Mistle blistle, 'Go hell!' Wow."

"No, I did *not*, you yellow, lop-eared heathen," he answered good-naturedly.

"I says, says I: '*Mister, mister, terbacker twister, you goldang blister, go kiss yer silly sister, hu, hu, hu!*' and I kep' on poundin'.

"Mebby I didn't see his face git afire an' his gun han' go quick down to his belt. I, never pretendin', jus' kep' on poundin' that drill. I thought it was shoot sure. Then did he lovin'ly stay



roun' sociable? Er did he go off slow mebbby to shoot his silly sister, huh? He riz right up an' went down the tun'l, tryin' to translate them words into his red noggin'."

"Planne dlust, Blill, how?" asked Charlie, shaken out of his discretion by his anxiety to know the contents of the pan.

"No hurry, Charlie. Eat, drink an' be merry fer you ought to 've died a year ago. Now wha' do I 'spect to git in this here pan? Air we broke, busted, kerflumixed, skinned? Wha' do I 'spect, loppay?" And, as if he could withhold his secret no longer, he burst out: "Nine hunderd billion trillion thousan' hunderd thimblefuls o' nuggets." The ferret eyes around him glittered and his helpers gaggled barbarously.

Those yellow miners had watched that pan of blue gravel and it looked promising, very promising; the white broken bits of quartz looked channel-worn; they knew the muck was good. Why *would* he not hurry, they wondered; why was the boss torturing them?

"Good gwavel, Nutmek, say big? Ow?" asked Charlie, daring greatly.

Nutmeg Bill slowly clawed the top gravel off, lazily picked the pan up, swirled it around in the water hole, then set it down again. His blue eyes fished slyly around at the miners, but he could no longer resist knowing what the pan said. He suddenly dove in the pan with his stumpy claws and pulled out the hidden nugget.

"What's *that*, you devils?" he screeched, and he shoved it harshly in every apish countenance there. Smoking furiously, he began to pan ragingly. As the last whirls of the prospect pan showed a patrician row of channel-washed clumps of gold attended by a cortege of little yellow hosts, Nutmeg danced around hugging the pan, shouting, laughing, yelling. He ran into the echoing tunnel, screaming:

"*Whistle, whistle, whistle*—you green devils o' Nigger Hill!" Then Nutmeg set the glory pan down at the entrance to the echoing tunnel, and white man and yellow man caught hands and cir-

cled it like crazed barbarians around some sacrificial fane.

Sixty days later the Green Devil claim had yielded four hundred and fifty pounds of nugget gold, worth "sixteen fifty" at the San Francisco customs market. It was channel-washed gold as "fat" as ever intoxicated an Argonaut. The last day Nutmeg balanced a pound for each of his helpers and took a pinch from each pound for the weighing. Then, as the Chinese were ready to go, he took a little handful of the precious nuggets from his pile for each, and stuffed it roughly in their pouches, saying: "Good-bye, boys; this is extry fer old times' sake. Now git."

After they had gone away he carried his coffee cans of nuggets to the fifty-foot right drift at the tunnel's inner end. There, perched a little distance up on the granite rim of the channel to escape the seeping floor water, he gloated over the precious stuff, slaving and crooning like a half-insane miser.

The little flame of the candle lit the drift hole dimly; and Nutmeg, sprawled over his gold, mumbling incoherently, suddenly thought of Antoinette's last letter.

"Them green devils have got me, hain't they, yes? Last dollar she was a-goin' to send? Ain't said a word fer sixty days. 'Spect mebbby I ain't a-diggin' gopher holes yit, Annie! Runnin' *along* the channel rim 'stead o' 'crost it, huh? Shorty, I am 'spectin' to have a word with you purty soon. I'll see you, too, Annie, an' I'll call you. I'll git two draf's, size alike, an' tossin' hers to her careless like, I'll say: 'I have been a-gopherin', miss, lately; just please take yer share an' go plumb to —.' An' mebbby when goin' through the door I'll spit back: 'Is yer whistlin' goin' on good now, miss? Hu, hu, hu!' Then, Shorty, I'll git my gun p'inted right an' say, kind o' careless: 'Be I Mr. William Green of Naugertuck, or Nuttymaigy, w'ich?' 'Nen his fox rump hair'll turn purple, 'nen white. Next he'll say: 'Mr. William Green of Naugertuck, ef you please.' Then by that time, ef he



ain't a corpse, I'll up an' say fer final: 'Was Mr. William Green of Naugertuck, late Nutmaig Bill—was that gent a-run-nin' *len'thways* o' the channel er was he a-runnin' 'cross it an' strikin' the richest streak o' gravel in goddlemity's worl', huh?'

"If he says, modes', that the Green Devil gravel was the richest streak on goddlemity's weepin' yearth, *mebby* I'll low him to stay on the outside, 'stead o' th' inside o' the coyotes. 'Nen—'nen—I reckon—p'raps—I'll lick up an' go a-sailin' and a-singin' to that pary-dise o' Naugertuck."

He sat there filled with conflicting thoughts. "'Spect I better go out an' git a snack t' eat 'nen cover these cans up. I just—fer a minnit don't know—'zactly—how—I—am—a-goin' to man-age it."

When he reached the tunnel mouth it was black night and the rain drizzled. The slumbrous beat of the rain on the deerweed, the manzanita bushes and the vines brought a music to his soul a great deal sweeter than he had ever known. His head bent over; lower and lower it sank and at last he dozed. Chinking bats angled around him, but he did not hear them, for his dreams were sweet. A fox slipped by and glared into the entrance and stole warily on. There was the long, tremulous cry of a panther and he stirred uneasily as he dozed; a pair of screech owls flew in the entrance crying eerily. He woke.

He poised his gun, straining tensely to see. The rain beat harder and the steady pattle of the drops from the eaves of the bunkhouse caused him to move uneasily as he listened. "I wonder ef them *air* footsteps? I feel tarnal uneasy somehow; somethin's aroun'. Good night to rob a rocker er steal a *cache*. I guess I ought to gravel my cans over in the right drif'." He went cautiously to the entrance and looked into the featureless blackness. "Some-thin's a hoverin' over me; I reckon I better gravel 'em over." A bat whisked near his cheek; he drew back in terror. He returned to his seat and felt about in the darkness, breathing noisily. "A cat could slip in here; no fire. Notion

to go in the bunkhouse—leaks so. I wish 'twas mornin'." He heard a strange, piercing cry; he jerked erect, holding his lungs. "That's a wild cat." He backed away into the further recesses of the tunnel as if he expected attack. "I wish Charlie was here."

Returning to his cans, he perched them higher on the granite wall. The drift floor was wet. He fumbled for his powder charge, his candles throwing a ghostly light. He sat there watching his coffee cans, his eyes softening with infinite greediness as he gazed. There was one hundred thousand dollars' worth of native gold within touch. "It'd serve some pardners just about right to tell 'em, to tell 'em—she only put in nine, 'nen shook me.

"She ain't wearin' her wrist out writin', neither, the las' sixty days. Lord amighty, won't they be starin' back there when they see me swellin' down the street with nuggets big as robin aigs on my watch chain? Will it be Banker Green er Nutmaig, heh? You purty yellin' devils!" He dumped a can of nuggets on the hard floor on the rim. "*Looks* like gopher minin', don't it? Hu, hu!"

He turned a handful back and forth in his huge hands, allowed the nuggets to dribble off his red, hairy wrists. He took two princely clumps and tossed them up and down in the air. Then he emptied a part of the can into his pocket, stood up and shivered ecstatically as he felt the sagging weight. "Anybody hear any whistlin' roun' here? Some people don't know nothin' no time an' nowher'. Goin' back on a pard!" He placed the heavy cans, one by one, shoulder high on the rim and counted them over four times. "Tomorry, fellers, I'll go over to Sutter's fer a pack. 'Tain't safe to beat through the woods with two muleloads an' one gun. They'd steal 'em." He quickly threw his arms around them as if to protect them, then backed off, grinning foolishly.

"Reckon I'm some loony 'bout you fellers. Nobody is agoin' to git *you*. Tomorry fer Sutter's. Most ev'rybody roun' here, 'cept two, air gone. 'Speri-



mentin' with that new white powder, Charlie said. Goes off too quick. Only ore gang next to mine, now, 'cept one, on th' other side o' the hill—all that's left now. I reckon it's good ni', purties; reckon it's good ni'. Got to cover y' up. Got to tuck yuh in yer little tundle beddie. Good ni', babies; tomorry—" Then something happened that made Nigger Hill famous in the mining annals of California.

A huge charge of the new mining powder in "213," close to the Green Devil claim, set by some drunken "powder man," burst "in" instead of out. In the early days of California mining this was the case in uncautiously worked or over-breasted gravel mines. The mighty force of the eruption, reaching tunnel after tunnel, burst through the thin ashen lava of Nutmeg's drift wall. There was a smothered, long echoing roar, a rush of hot air with blinding, heated dust, and Nutmeg Bill was knocked senseless by his cans of gold. There had been a crushing, twisting and grinding of mine posts, and he was three hundred and fifty feet from his tunnel's mouth and one hundred from the upper air—locked up, too, in a hole as dark and as silent as a tomb.

The drift floor water, gaining new accessions, ran over his big feet, reviving him a little; the fumes entered his lungs—he coughed himself awake. Dazed, he weakly sat erect, his face burning and his body tingling. He stared around him in the blackness, heard the spittle of loosened lava in the water, wondered what this new smell was, pondered what it was all about; then, slowly coming to his senses, he writhed with his burnings in the pulsing of the silence.

He did not shout or rave, nor sit there stupidly in despair. The sweat on the covered parts of his body ran in slow rivulets, but his heart pounded steadily. He felt to the right—granite. He pushed out his left arm like a man carefully feeling his way in the dark—nothing. He unsteadily stumbled erect, weaving a little from side to side. Again he extended his left arm in a large half-circle—vacancy. He bent farther out, and like the slow tentacle

of a devilfish he retrieved the vacant air. He knew from mining experience that a touch might start the "lava" again. His right arm, amoeba-like, sought the slanting rim of the granite; again nothing. He bent slowly after his arm as craftily as a fish otter after prey. He moved it very slowly around again, poised higher. His longest finger tip brushed past something sleek, cold and hard. The arm stopped, returned, touched again, stopped. Then, bending further and further, his shaking fingers clutched a coffee can and held there. He drew back with an imprecation as if it had stung him.

"Which side air you on?" he roared. And there seemed a dozen newfound tongues mocking him.

His ear caught a trickling sound; the hill water was slowly rising over his feet. He edged higher on the banks pushed back like a rat in a filling sewer. "It's reachin' fer me, reachin' fer me," he said gustily. The hill water was filling the hole. He felt above his head; the lava ash was soft and unbroken. He uttered in a tense whisper that echoed ghostly in the narrow place: "Tunnelin' level through the drift to the tunnel ain't possible. Can't git out *that* way. It'd cave an' ketch me." He stopped in deep thought, planning with his terms of escape. "It's a hundred 'long up the rim to the grass." He shook his head decisively. Again he felt the ashen lava above him, paused with his hand there and shook his head despairingly.

"If I had two timbers to hold it back—could try—'long the rim." He put out a foot slowly—paused; then the other; the floor water was up to his ankles. He touched a post crown, felt it with the hesitant softness of a snail, then began to wiggle it loose. There was a spittle, the start of lava; he shot back like a spider in its lair. He returned to it, cautiously weaved it loose and carried it back. Feeling around, he touched a mine post; no, that would not do. He searched further with infinite wariness. Another crown piece lay free in the water, and he whined joyfully as he took it back.



He sat with his hurt face in his hands pondering, more decisive than before. He rose and softly fingered the compressed lava ash above him; dug out a little, drew his big pocket blade and knifed it. The lava ash tumbled out easily. He started as a new thought surged through his mind. He tumultuously searched for a sulphur match, snapped it, lit a little piece of candle and gazed around in the pallid gloom.

"Ten-foot rat trap, with—a rat; an' ain't any door to the trap." He stared at the ceiling, peered around him, then blew the flame out. "Might need that taller before I come to grass." He glared upward in the rayless gloom. "Ain't no use—I reckon." He lit the candle again and turned to his coffee cans. There they sat primly high up on the ledge.

"Gol ding you, you got me into this," he cried. His eyes shot a doubtful, hostile light. He puffed angrily at the flame, twisted his pistol holster around behind him, closed his knife, and bending down, drank deeply. He sat with his elbows on his knees again. Reaching for his pocket, he took a huge chew of tobacco. His jaws worked slowly, doubtfully. He half consciously felt for his shovel, his mine crowns, tapped his pocket for his knife and stared upward to the unseen cans. His jaws stopped.

"What's the use?" He pulled his holster around before him and hesitatingly half drew his gun. Then his jaws moved thoughtfully again, became slower and slower in movement—stopped. *He pulled his gun clear.*

"Annie, I reckon I was a little hard on you. Shorty, mebbly—mebbly I was—a little hard on you, too. Don't make any difference w'ether I run the rim er acrost, er anything else; all's off now. And I—guess, Annie—after all—you'll have to keep on—whistlin'. Shorty, I s'pose you was on'y coddin'. But, Shorty—Shorty, why—you—jus' keep away from—from Annie. I won't stan' fer that"—his voice roared.

He jumped erect and felt the ceiling, clawed at it desperately as if he did not care whether it caved or not. He took out his knife, and grunted with satis-

faction as he felt the easily loosened miner's "lava" spittle down on his shoulders.

"Shorty, you got to keep away from Annie, you 'fernal liar!"

He quickly twisted his holster behind him, bent and drank again, took another huge chew of tobacco, his jaws crushing it violently. He swept out his hand incautiously, drew his shovel to him and spat on it. He took out his knife and spat on that. Then he wavered a little, and with very slow motions lit his piece of candle and held the feeble flame aloft. His eyes grew softer and softer. He took out his great cud of tobacco, brought his huge hand to his mouth and threw a kiss at the cans. Instantly ashamed, he gustily blew off the flame. He breathed gulpingly, stepped down and rolled in the water, drippingly rose, found his candle and stuck it into his pocket. Then he dug.

"Shorty," he roared, as the loosened "lava" rattled over him into the water, "you keep away er I'll kill you."

Like an earthworm he wriggled upward; like a gopher he scratched the soft compressed "lava" behind him; desperately defying death, he gophered for his life and for Annie. The ash would stream down until the lower end of his hole was almost filled, then he would slide down to it and shovel it back into the farthest recess of the drift.

"I'll keep the lower en' clear long's I kin fer water; the crowns'll come handy when the rim goes suddenly flat. Feller c'n do a lot o' gopherin', 'specially—if he don't git ketched."

After many hours he grew faint for food, but not for an instant did he stop that clawing at the soft "lava" upward to the blessed air and liberty. Once the rim flattened suddenly and there was a caving.

"No you don't, you green devils!" he cried out savagely as he struggled free. Then he continued scratching, clawing, knifing, gophering, kicking the debris behind him, filling his hole.

*And now it was midnight of the third day.*

He had come to the bottom of the ten-



foot covering at the top, the red soil of the glacial drift, nearly exhausted, thirst-crazed, gnawed by hunger, writhing with his hurts. His debris had cut off his water supply and he was beating for life at his coffin lid.

His burnt lips opened; his seared, grimy, fouled face worked thickly as he mumbled: "I reckon I jus' *could* w'istle a bit myself, Annie, w'ile restin'."

He pursed his swollen lips—there was a broken sibilant rush of breath, a penitential wheeze of air, and that was all. He shook his head in disgust.

An hour later he felt the fine sand of the tough grass roots raining down on his shoulders. It was then he whined like a dog digging close to a rat in its burrow, champed his teeth like a fighting boar. A little air swelled sweetly in. He raved, fanged at the tough fibers, slashed insanely at the roots with his knife, butted the hole larger, spurred it wider with his elbows and, ramming his head through, hung there unconscious.

He revived a little, hearing voices as if in a scarcely remembered dream. They seemed far off, yet he almost knew them. That voice surely was Annie's; but why was she screaming so? Annie's voice! He almost thrilled awake. Why does she not come to him? Whom is she cursing? What! She is calling down awful imprecations on Billy Green. "Why, I am Billy Green," he thought, and his senses came in.

"I give Beelee Green mine money, nine t'ousan' dollar. He steal my share; he run away; he skeep. Le Chineeseman, le Charlee, he say million dollar in Green Devale. Teef! Teef! Teef!" He tried to see her through his foulness and hurts, but the place around him seemed black. His ears told him that strong men were agitatedly trying to hold and soothe her.

"Let me go. Teef, teef!" she screamed madly. The half-dead, blind gopherman was wigwagging his head. A mud-

like devil ball, streaked in yellow, gray and red, opened; a wide crack came across its center, gaped, but could utter no sound.

"He make big fool by Antoinette, steal my grubstake, mine share; he stab my heart. Oh! I love him mootch, but teef, teef!" She tried to jerk loose. "I go keel myself." She jerked loose and came straight to the mud devil, still gaping there in the grass. She saw the thing wigwag and halted short. Clear as a bell a voice came out of the still widely extended gap:

"Annie, you're a liar, and I kin prove it!"

She knew the beloved voice, but the thing! She clutched her skirts like a bird about to fly. "*Pour l'amour de Dieu!* Beelee?" Her voice fell to a crackling whisper of superstitious fear.

"Nutmeg — Annie — gopherin' — fer — you." And the crack stood open. She sprang at the ball and closed it in her beautiful arms. Then, screaming like one possessed of devils, she began to tug at him and pulled him out, placing his head in her lap. Hysterically laughing and weeping, she began to wipe the mud from his eyes, and then as she saw the light in the little gander-blue eyes, she knew surely it was her beloved. She moaned and wept and laughed and wiped at his face by turns, stopping once or twice to rock the thing in her arms.

"Beelee, where you bin?" she asked as she fought off the men around her.

"Mos'ly — in — hell — Annie," she heard faintly. He was now much revived and his senses clear. Suddenly she felt a dirty hand stealing up around her neck, and understood its insistent pull. She bent close to his lips, and in an almost inaudible whisper heard:

"Annie, darlin', a snack o' beans—an' a—dipper o' water—'ud—'ud come mos'—'fernal—handy 'bout now."



NO one is ever foolish at the proper time.



# SEPARATION

By Brian Hooker

**D**AWN light and bird song, and trees against the blue—  
All the lights of heaven, dear, are fair because of you!  
But now the fields are fallow, and all the skies are gray—  
Empty of the sight of you to light love's way.

Hearth light and home song, and voices by the fire,  
Merry with your mirth, dear, and warm with your desire—  
But now the house is hollow, and all the fires are chill,  
Barren of the joy of you to wake love's will.

Come to me, bring back to me the worth of day and night,  
The body of all beauty and the soul of all delight!—  
Sunbeam and starshine, roses after rain,  
The color and the melody, the laughter and the pain,  
And all my life alive in me to hold you close again!



# APRIL

By Louis Untermeyer

**T**AKE a sip of April,  
Quaff the fiery spring—  
Till you thrill with joyous envy  
Many a buried king.  
Death's a giddy precipice;  
Dance upon its brink—  
Here is life, a brimming goblet;  
Drink!

Toss off winds and laughter,  
Music and delight,  
While the moon's a great pearl melting  
In the cup of night.  
Pour the wild libation  
Gaily ere you sink;  
Here's the world's impulsive madness—  
Drink!



# WHEN THE WINE IS IN

By Evelyn M. Campbell

THEY were such a pretty pair. Crabbed diners, engaged with their soup or in arguments with the waiter, glanced up as they passed and became less crabbed, less argumentative. The eyes of the head waiter himself followed them appreciatively.

The boy, walking a little in advance, had the air of a conquering general, so proud and so self-assured was he. Very recent shaving had left his face yet pink from the razor and white from talcum, and with that dewy look that the prettiest girl cannot manage. He passed on, looking neither to the right nor left, superbly unconscious of the other diners. His whole attention was centered apparently on the stupendous task of choosing the right table.

The girl followed close at his elbow—the prettiest thing imaginable, and self-conscious enough for both of them. She wore a slightly low cut rose-colored gown, very tight about the bottom, and an immense black hat loaded with nodding plumes—a hat that on anyone less pretty would have reminded one that in outlying districts a large, plumed, black velvet hat, is, has always been and will always be the last cry of fashion. But, upon her, the costume quite matched his spick and span new Tuxedo. They had arrived at the hotel after six, and had taken time to make a full toilet before dinner—the third time they had dressed that day. The embarrassment and novelty of hooking up her gown had left him flushed and palpitant, yet triumphant. Where did the joke come in about these fellows growling over doing a little thing like that?

They did not dream that anyone suspected them of having been married that

afternoon. They could not imagine that the aroma of a big church wedding yet clung about them. The girl, who, looking for them, encountered so many interested glances, thought them called forth by the smartness of her frock, and responded with little fugitive blushes.

The waiter found them a side table near the end of the room, hedged in by an absorbed Chicago drummer and a portly middle-aged couple, where they settled themselves like two twittering birds.

Across the inevitable pink-shaded candle, they consulted each other's eyes instead of the menu, while the waiter stood patiently by. After a while he insinuated the card between them.

The dinner was ordered. The girl was daintily indifferent to food and the boy overly anxious that it should be a dinner of dinners. Quite at the end, when the question of dessert had been settled, he made a suggestion—a daring one.

"Look here, Dorothy, things are different now," he said, blushing. "I'm going to order one little drink before the dinner comes. Just a cocktail, a sweet one. It will tone you up after the trip." This with an air well calculated to deceive the waiter into believing that they had come across the continent.

She was shocked.

"A cocktail! Oh, Harry! You know mamma never allowed us to have—"

"Your mother isn't with us now," in a tone of masterful finality. "I know it will be good for you. You'll take it if I say so?" tenderly.

"I'd rather not." Her pretty face



wore a look of distaste. "Please don't ask me. I hate drinking things."

Her resistance made him all the more insistent.

"But how do you know when you've never tried?" triumphantly. "Here," to the waiter. "Bring us two Manhattans. Now then," with the air of having settled fate, "you must just forget about Collinsville, and remember that we are out to have a good time."

They fell to talking of the play they meant to see that night. The half-grown city where the first lap of their honeymoon was being spent boasted of the usual two theaters. The boy was inclined to the Grand and a musical comedy, but the girl, with the memory of her home town Book Club strong within her, held out for Ibsen by a touring company at the Majestic. They were serious about it, each insisting on giving way to the other, when the cocktails arrived.

Dorothy made a little moue at the taste of hers. She had first glanced guiltily around to see if anyone was observing her. Harry looked to her for approbation.

"It isn't so bad, now is it?" he coaxed.

"N-no," she agreed reluctantly. "It's rather like mamma's cherry wine."

Then he showed her how to touch glasses, and they laughed gaily over that ceremony until their glasses were empty. The dinner was long in coming, so Harry ordered the second drink. He was determined that there should be nothing "short" about their first evening together.

The girl did not demur at the second cocktail, but sipped it daintily and with enjoyment. Her eyes began to glow with that deep, subdued light that is to be seen in the heart of a wood fire. The long-fringed lids drooped slumbrously. Her attitude changed. Even her clothes seemed to have adapted themselves differently to her body as she drooped across the little table to the boy, who returned her look with eager eyes.

They talked in whispers. The Chicago drummer, annoyed, could not hear. He began to wonder.

Perhaps the elaborate toilet was misleading, after all. The girl's attitude was too sophisticated.

The boy had ordered a bottle of wine, and when it came the girl watched all the byplay of opening and pouring with interested eyes. She placed the glass to her lips and tasted. Her first glass of champagne.

"Oh, I love this!" she cried ecstatically, her eyes growing brilliant. Then, with adoration: "You *do* know what is nice, Harry! You must have been about such a lot."

Naturally Harry rather preened himself at that.

"Oh, some," he admitted magnanimously. "I haven't always lived in Collinsville, you know. There are lots of people who wouldn't think of dinner without a cocktail and a little wine."

A shadow passed over the girl's face. She began making rings on the tablecloth with her champagne glass.

"I—know," she said slowly. "What a lot of girls you must have known, Harry!"

And Harry, like thousands of other men before him, rushed blindly to his fate.

"Oh, I have known a few," he agreed fatuously, "and most of them would take a drink. That is why I want you to learn, Dorothy. I like an up-to-date girl."

The fire in her eyes began to grow brighter. A dark flush crept over her face, but the shadow of her black hat hid these things. Her hand trembled, but she raised the glass to her lips and drained it. The boy was too rapt in his own reflections to notice these signs.

"So you want me to be like them!" she laughed shrilly. "Why didn't you teach me long ago, then? Why have you bored yourself for six months with so dull a person as I?"

Harry was all contrition.

"But you were not married then," he explained kindly. "You may learn many things now that would not have done at all then."

"So these girls you drank with were married?"

It was his turn to flush.



"Not all of them. Hang it all, Dorothy," crossly, "don't follow a fellow up so."

The waiter had replenished her glass, and she sipped at it steadily. Somehow it looked incongruous with her little childish face.

"It is so strange," she said after a while, with unconscious wisdom. "If I hadn't been—if you hadn't believed me to be—a perfectly nice girl, you wouldn't have married me, or wouldn't have gone about with me—in Collinsville. Yet as soon as we are married you want me to begin being like women who are not—nice. For married women who drink with young men cannot be very nice. It is strange."

He had the man's answer all ready.

"You don't understand. I only want you to drink with me. What is just sociability away from Collinsville, would be a crime there. God deliver me from narrow, little town ideas. A woman has to be all good or all bad."

"Yet you married me. I am Collinsville."

"But you have the possibilities of other things. You can be taught. If I had thought you would grow into a woman like your Aunt Kate, or even—pardon me; it is true—your mother, and become as narrow and bigoted as they, not even my love could have survived it."

He had one of those natures that any indulgence makes insufferable. An older woman would have been amused at what to the girl was a tragedy. Poor little thing, her castles were tumbling about her ears.

They were both furiously angry, and for no reason whatever. The boy, of a lighter nature, was only fretfully rude, but in the girl burned passion all the more fierce because it had never before been aroused. They eyed each other with unconcealed fury, while the fumes of the unaccustomed liquor curled caressingly through their brains.

The girl was thinking deeply. The froth from her last glass of wine had run over and wetted the cloth a little, so that the hard little rings she made with the foot of the glass retained their print.

She seemed to be counting them, but she was really concentrating herself to crush. Finally she broke the silence that had fallen between them.

"There has never been any danger," she said slowly, "that I would grow like my mother, or like Aunt Kate. I should be very happy to be like either, in spite of what you say. They are good women, and happy women."

He made a gesture of derision but she did not notice him.

"I'm going to tell you something about Collinsville. All people from the city who come to little towns laugh at their simple ways, their ignorance of the world. They don't know that underneath all sorts of things are going on: scandals, doubledealings—sometimes terrible things—you never know about them, because they are never found out. It is the people in the little towns who know that secret—how not to be found out. And those who do know keep quiet, or just whisper among themselves. The papers don't print stories about people as the city papers do—"

Harry laughed aloud in scornful amusement.

"I should say not. Uncle John might stop his subscription if Cousin Fred's character was attacked. And it is certainly a shame the way Sophie Medart goes to the Globe Drug Store to see Alf Morris, the soda water clerk."

"How do you know it is the clerk she goes there to see?" said Dorothy evenly. "That is the first secret the little town girl learns to keep—the hidden lover. Do you remember that, when you first came to Collinsville, I refused for over three months to let you call? You were in father's bank, and you asked me every time I went there. I refused because I was in love with another man."

His laughter was quenched. "In love! Dorothy!"

"Yes. In love. It was impossible for me to bear another man near me."

"But who? I never saw you with anyone else. Who was it?"

His amazement was fast turning to anger, but she was perfectly cool.

"Because we were never together in



public. He was a married man. It was he who suggested that I go with you to—to cover things over. After a while I grew to like you. But for a long time—”

He was choking with rage. He tore at his collar. People began looking around, and the waiter shielded them as best he could.

“And you told me no man had ever kissed you! You dared to marry me! No doubt he planned it—to put you off on another man—an honorable man. But you’ve got to tell me who it is, and then I’ll kill—”

She interrupted in her unruffled, unnaturally calm voice.

“Oh, no, you’ll not, because you’ll never know. I loved him for a while, but it’s all over now. I don’t care for him any longer. I’d really grown fond of you.”

She looked like a mocking Bacchante, and her beauty and self-possession grew each moment, but the boy was frightful. His helpless rage, which his surroundings forced him to hold in check, distorted his young face to repulsion. They looked at each other with bitterness and aversion. By some trick of nature their faces wore the look that might come naturally in twenty years, after love and youth had been exhausted.

The girl rested on her laurels, and the boy, controlling himself at last, and being the weaker nature, reached for the weapon that has always been the woman’s prerogative, the last word. And his stroke was none the less keen that it came last.

“I ought not to complain of my bargain,” he said bitterly. “I cheated, too, though I never meant you should know. You reminded me a while ago of my persistency in calling on you against your will. When you came in your father’s bank I always importuned you for that wonderful privilege, didn’t I? But you never wondered why. You were so sure it was because you were so pretty, so enchanting; you never thought there might be another reason. And there was. You were the banker’s daughter, my pretty dear, and I an

humble bank clerk who wanted to get on in the world.”

It was her turn to choke, but she did not cry out as he had done.

“You were an only daughter,” he went on in the best dramatic manner. “I knew that as your husband I was bound to get on. That you were pretty went with the game. Men don’t marry just for good looks any more. All women are pretty, and all of them don’t want to marry—only in little towns where they can’t get away unless they do. So you were easy. You thought yourself so irresistible that, when I told you I thought so, too, you believed me. There are thousands like you. Your little story of the married man only adds you to a larger class. Well, we know the truth about each other, at least.”

He stopped finally. His unleashed cruelty was satiated, and there was no further fuel for his rage to feed upon. Vanity lay in the dust. The girl’s face was deadly white, and the fire in her eyes was dulled.

“It doesn’t have to go on,” she said thickly. “When papa knows—”

“About your married friend?”

The waiter, who had been hovering anxiously about, decided that the time had come to end the little play. He gauged that the breaking point could not be further away than the elevator and three stops. So he took them in hand.

It was a long way to the entrance of the café. Most of the diners were gone, and those who were left looked after the young couple.

They were in the elevator, going up. They had forgotten about the theater and the play they meant to see. Why did the elevator boy grin when Harry said with such an accumulation of dignity, “To my room”?

There was another passenger, who stepped back with deference to make room for them, and to him the girl bowed with exaggerated sweetness as she left the car. She meant to be kindly and charming to everyone, even if her life was wrecked—was wrecked—

The boy awoke first. He was on a hard, round sofa, beneath a pitiless



window, through which an icy draught and unlimited coal dust filtered impartially. Memory began the struggle with the remnants of sleep. He shut his eyes, and a long, shivering sigh ran through him. The sigh was echoed from the bed in the center of the room. He looked over.

"Oh, I am so ill," moaned the girl's voice faintly.

"Are you—honey?"

He got up and made his way unsteadily to where she lay. He yet wore his trousers and evening shirt; the new dinner coat and the rest of his belongings lay in a heap on a chair by the side of another rose pink heap. His skin was mottled and his eyes red-rimmed. He glanced at her and looked hastily away.

She lay inert across the counterpane, her face hidden in her white arms. Her dainty bridal finery was twisted and crumpled, and some of the lace her

mother had so reverently rolled and whipped was torn away. She whimpered a little when he awkwardly touched her shoulder.

"Never mind, girlie; you'll feel better presently."

"Don't ever make me touch wine again—"

"Never!" with heartfelt energy. "It was all my fault," brokenly.

"Don't say that."

They kissed. Still she hid her face, and he looked down. In the light of day the pseudo-tragedy of the night before began to seem trivial, their heroics ridiculous. Youth began to claim its own. They kissed again, and tacitly agreed to forgive. They were ashamed to meet each other's eyes, and covered their confusion with the warmth of their embrace. But a chill lay between them. It was as if each were asking in his heart of hearts:

"How much of it was true?"



## SUNDAY

By Ludwig Lewisohn

THE girl next door on her piano plays  
A hymn tune, empty, tinkling, oversweet;  
Else there's no sound along the clean-swept street,  
Which seems to know the proper Sunday ways.  
But soon begins, suave, dignified, the day's  
Accustomed movement. As is godly and meet,  
The burghers tread to church on conscious feet  
With wives resplendent in stiff silks and stays.

And I, too, worship the Eternal. Far  
Beyond the orbit of the thousandth star  
Soars my wild prayer into the universe  
Even from the arid desert of my woes—  
Wherein these bundles of good Sunday clothes  
Would only blanch and quiver, cringe and curse!



**W**OMEN, to be successful with the opposite sex, must learn to treat young men with respect and old ones with familiarity.



# THE FLASH

By Ruth Clark

"I NEVER saw you drive so fast, Paul."

"I never wanted to get to any place so badly."

They had been married just an hour, and were going out to Paul's farm for a week.

"Don't you want to?" he asked.

They turned a curve in the road, and could see a light in the farmhouse window.

"No," Sally went on musingly, "I think I'd rather see the house always ahead of us 'way up on the hill. I'd rather be going forever and forever up toward it, but never quite get there. Do take me a little farther."

"But, Sally, it's late. It's ten, I'm sure."

"Just till eleven, only one hour."

Paul drove on slowly. "There's a storm coming up," he said. "Are you afraid?"

"I like storms."

"Pshaw! I hoped you were afraid."

Sally laughed. They heard a distant low rumbling of thunder. "May I go back now?" he asked.

"Oh, let's go on to the pike, and home that way. If we turn here we'll beat the storm easily; and I want to race it."

Paul went faster. The wind blew furiously. They heard the trees swaying and twisting and cracking around them. The lightning grew brighter. The rain poured down and the thunder roared. They turned in the lane and were within a few yards of the house. Paul stopped suddenly. A limb had blown across the road. He got out to pull it off. Sally jumped out, too.

"I'll run to the house," she called, "while you put the machine up. Hurry."

Paul ran the car into the barn. As he hurried to the house a frightful flash and crash came at once. He stopped a second, then opened the door and called.

There was no answer. He walked into the living room. She was not there. He went upstairs two steps at a time. He searched the bedroom and could not find her. He ransacked all the rooms. The big clock downstairs slowly chimed eleven.

"Sally," he called, "time's up. It's eleven by the grandfather's clock." He listened for a faint giggle or the soft rustle of a petticoat. But he heard only the lingering tones of the dying chimes. He ran down to the kitchen and asked the servants if they had seen her. Miss Sally had not come in yet, they said. He looked on the porch. He saw something lying just a few feet from the house. It was Sally. He gathered her up. Her young body was soft and yielding. He carried her in to the light. The wonderful peace of death already brooded over the features. The lightning had burned away some of her lustrous red curls.

Paul started upstairs with her. When he was halfway up he turned and came down. He found one of his old coats and wrapped it around her. He took her to the machine and started the engine and drove down the lane and away from the house. The storm was over. The stars were hunting little holes in the clouds to peep through. The wind had settled down to a contented murmur. Paul drove all night, with one hand on the wheel and the other arm around Sally. At dawn he gave her back to her mother.



# AMBITION

By Frederick Booth

THE hour of nine was striking from the rococo tower of the courthouse, when, true to his daily summer habit, Dad Colburn appeared through the door of the Palace Hotel as if he were playing cuckoo to the clock and stood blinking contentedly across the sunlit public square. The iron clangor of the ninth stroke rang across the tops of the trees and houses; and then, as it died, there rose again into ear the small, mean and sordid clatter of voices and traffic from the thoroughfares of the little countyseat. Dad Colburn, unaware probably of his role of cuckoo, did not disappear again within the hotel entrance when the clock had finished striking, but sat down within the narrow shade of the awning in a green chair, hoisted his heavy legs upon a knife-scarred box which he drew from behind him, and complacently lighted a mulatto panetela.

The hours of the day were pleasant to the owner and proprietor of the Palace Hotel; as also were the hours of the night, spent waking or sleeping: they were pleasant because he had nothing whatever to do. For this reason the hotelkeeper felicitated himself quite often on the ownership of the Palace Hotel. It put him in the lee of the vicissitudes of life. It gave him a comfortable living, with most of the work thrust upon the shoulders of the help, and it gave him good, long hours in which to loaf and invite his soul. Not for him were ambition or shrewd and avaricious dickering or antlike industry. Give him a lifelong meal ticket—said he to himself—a place to sleep o' nights, a place to sit o' days at gaze upon a silly, sunny, hurrying world, an agreeable

crony or two who could hold a good leisurely hand at cribbage or seven-up, or play a slow, indifferent game of checkers—no one to hurry, no one to say come or go and he was satisfied.

So this morning he could sit and watch, through his putty-colored eyes, the diverting spectacle of the people sweating in the sun, as a mud turtle ensconced upon a rock observes with lethean disdain the insect life that is so quick and dies so soon whirling about him. He could smoke one cigar, and then he could smoke another; and after that, if he did not go off into a doze, he could smoke a third; and still again, if Sam Harold or Bill Steward did not come to inveigle him into a slowfooted game of pool, he could smoke a fourth. By that time it would be twelve o'clock; and while the help served dinner to the traveling men lightning rod agents and casual automobile parties who were his source of revenue, he could sit at his own table and devour a stupendous dinner of fresh river catfish, boiled potatoes, onions and blackberry pie.

Through his putty-colored eyes Dad Colburn observed a world which, he believed, had made a mistake. On occasion he felicitated himself orally and in few words on having chosen that better part in which toiling and spinning were left to somebody else. He was serene; he would fold his hands and take it easy. He took it easy. The golden day waxed older, his cigar shorter. The hour of ten was proclaimed from the gingerbread atrocity perched atop of the court house. A number of people passed the thick shape in the green chair, their shoes scuffing on the pavement in the small-town attempt at smartness. Some



of them nodded at the hotelkeeper; some addressed him in familiar terms; others spoke to him with a pretense at deference. These various modes of salutation signified the passing of those who considered themselves his superiors, his equals or his inferiors; but in return he blinked without a word, nodded his head patronizingly and blew an indifferent cloud of smoke against their backs.

The eleventh hour passed; it drew on toward noon; and Dad Colburn perceived within himself certain uneasy rumblings near the region of his waistband that told him he was becoming hungry. About this time, happening to glance over toward the old wooden covered bridge which spanned the little river at the edge of the town, he saw a man emerge from its shadow, advance with hesitant steps into the sunshine of the square, and, after looking about him with some diffidence, take the street that led past the hotel. The hotelkeeper at a glance knew this man to be what he termed a hungry bum. Something in the manner and appearance of the man caused him to reflect that he looked like one of those birds of the order of stork or heron, with its feathers blown out into a blowzy bunch, its wings drawn up until the joints made a double peak, and, the neck being drawn down and invisible, the head resting between the wings in an attitude of melancholy introspection. The resemblance to the bird was caused partly by the fact that the man had pulled off his coat and thrown it over his shoulders so that it spread out on either side of him; the resemblance was completed by his huge, drawn-up shoulders, his drawn-down neck and beaklike nose, his thin and sticklike legs. He walked gingerly yet with a certain grim stateliness, picking his feet up high as if the pavement were hot and his soles tender. His shoulders were stooped, which but accentuated his great height; he held his head sideways and looked at the pavement, not with both eyes but with one; and altogether had the manner of a man who carries a load and uneasily measures within himself the capacity for carrying it a little farther. His left hand held his coat to his shoulder; his

right hand carried a canvas bag with the handle at the end instead of at the side. This bag banged against his knee as he walked and gave forth a clanking sound.

He was dusty and gloomy, and the cadaverous condition of his body, together with the restlessness of his eye, suggested a good many days of bootless prowling for provender and cover. Housewives are good to a man if he is small and sickly, talks in a weakish voice and wears a fancy waistcoat and a derby hat; but if he is big and shaggy, and wears, like this one, a greasy cap, heaven help him, for they will not. They think he has done something awful and will do it again.

The clatter of dishes coming through the open door of the hotel from the dining room, where the negro girls were preparing the tables for the midday meal, together with the smell of food, caught the tramp's ear and nose when he came opposite the door. Without noticing the hotelkeeper, he stopped, and the wooden grimness of his body was quickened by a pathetic alertness. He craned out his neck, looking in. He opened his mouth a number of times, and each time he opened it a thin trickle of saliva ran down his chin. The hotelkeeper heard him mutter:

"Settin' th' table!"

When a man has been without money but a day or two, and the fact is but an incident to which the victim has not yet become accustomed, he still mechanically feels in his pockets every time he sees something he would like to have; but this man, the hotelkeeper observed, had evidently lost the habit through its uselessness. He might have had no pockets; he gazed at the promise of plenty to eat for others evidently without hope for himself. Presently he made as if to move on, looking back over his shoulder reluctantly, and in doing so stumbled against the hotelkeeper's footstool.

"Beg pardins," he muttered a little sullenly and would have passed, but Dad Colburn reached out with his foot and pushed forward perhaps six inches another green chair. Then he spoke in a



low, twanging guttural that sounded not unlike the grunt of a bullfrog at night.

"Se' down, bo," he said. "You ain't in no hurry, I reckon?"

The tramp looked twice at the hotel-keeper; and as if he read something in the broad face below his own that was more hospitable than the words spoken, his gigantic frame suddenly broke itself into a number of angles and he fell rather than sat down in the other green chair. His bag fell with a clatter on the sidewalk. He let his head hang forward and his dull eyes looked steadily at the ground, no doubt without seeing anything.

The hotelkeeper forbore to quiz his guest, but stroked his mustache and cast an eye upon the clock, whose hands were reaching close upon the hour of noon. The tramp did not move, except now and then to scratch himself or to shuffle his feet slightly as if the flies that buzzed about his sodden and broken shoes disturbed his lethargy.

At last the clock struck and the hotelkeeper got up with the only kind of alacrity that ever animated him; that is, an alacrity to eat. The man did not stir; perhaps his face changed a little, perhaps a somber gleam lit up his eye for a moment; it may be he waited with a little hope for an invitation; but he gave no outward sign. Dad Colburn put his hand upon his shoulder.

"Come on in, bo," he said. "Time for grub."

The man looked up as a man looks who has heard his name called when he is sure he is in a strange land and alone.

"Huh?" he said.

The hotelkeeper crooked his finger and said: "Come on in; I'll give you a feed."

Some people were going into the dining room, but the hotelkeeper conducted his charge into the little back office which opened from the corner of the lobby, and set him down by the big littered desk.

"You set here," he said with good humor; "I guess you can eat off of a desk."

The tramp wet his lips and began to smooth down his coat, which he had put on, with uneasy fingers.

"Yeh," he muttered, "yeh." Then, with an empty-stomached attempt at good humor: "The last time I et it was outa a *cornfield*. I et corn—*raw*."

Under the hotelkeeper's careful eye, for the proper and generous distribution of food was to him a rite to be religiously performed regardless of remuneration, one of the girls carried into the office and spread out upon the desk a tray of food which in variety and quantity would have satisfied a gourmand. The hotelkeeper saw that the tramp trembled as he reached for his knife and fork.

"Now, jist reach and he'p yourse'f," he said; "there's a-plenty sich as it is. Don't be back'ard, and if there ain't enough on that there platter jist holler for more. As the feller said, there's a-plenty more down in the cellar in a tea-cup. I'll go and eat my dinner and then I'll be right back."

Half an hour later Dad Colburn, with a cigar in his mouth and his face beaming with contentment, reentered the office.

"Well," he said, "how'd you make out?"

The tramp had cleaned up everything edible on the tray and was putting his finger in some spilled salt and thence into his mouth. He had changed in appearance. The cheer of a good meal had blown him out wonderfully. He had been as apathetic and dull-eyed as a man drugged; now his face was red and there was a misty sparkle in his eye, a human look, almost a look of humor around his greasy mouth. He wiped his mouth with the back of his hand and looked up at the hotelkeeper.

"Say, pard," he said in a voice that was husky with repletion and emotion, "that was some handout. I ain't used to that. They gener'ly give me the sack when I ast fer a bite. Yuh got some wood to cut er coal to heave? I'll *work*."

"Aw, that's all right." The hotelkeeper waved the fat hand that held the cigar. "I bummed it once out West, in the eighties; I was on my uppers"—here he gave the tramp a cigar—"and I know what it is. Set wher' you are," he went on, as his listener got up as if to go; "set still and smoke. Jist



make yourse'f to home; you're welcome here."

The cigar and the kindness had a mellowing effect on the tramp; and no doubt partly because of that, and partly because he desired to match the hotelkeeper's confession of one-time indigence with a counter narrative of one-time prosperity on his own part, he began to talk.

"I wasn't al'ays this-a way," he said; "I was a *man* wunst. I had a job. I was a mechanic—automobeel. A expert! I worked in one o' them there shops up at Detroit, and if I do say it myse'f I was as good a trouble man and engine demonstrator as ever skinned 'is knuckle on a cotter key. Ther' was a boss ther' that run the test room that got the idy in 'is head I was after 'is job—which I ain't sayin' I wasn't—an' he'd jaw at me ever' chanst he got; then one day he cussed me. Well, I hit 'im. Yep. Knocked the hell outa 'im. He come fer me with a jack handle, an' I picked up a monkey wrench an' jist kinda kicked 'im in the butt o' the ear with it; an' blamed if he didn't nearly croak. Cracked 'is crust, and he wus in the hospital nearly two months.

"Well, they got me. 'Sault and battery with intent to kill, the docyments said, and they give me a coupla years. Did you ever do time? No? It's hell. It ain't the lonesomeness and the guards while yer in so much as it's the game o' freezeout you git into when you git out. I bin to all o' them automobile towns—Detroit, Akron, Dayton, Kokomo—clean up there; I bin all around, but nothin' doin'. Ef they ain't heerd about me they look me over and they know I bin up to somethin'—look at me. So I thought I'd bum my way on down to the capital city 'cause I thought—but shucks, they'll have me sized up."

The irresolute monologue trailed off into silence and the speaker sat with his head hanging over staring at the floor.

Dad Colburn leaned back in his chair, his hands folded over his roomy stomach, his eyes all but closed, and kept a steady bright glow at the end of his cigar. A wasp fussed at the window, trying to get out; from the street came the intermit-

tent clatter of wagons, the occasional tooting of automobile horns; but the two men were silent. The hotelkeeper was sizing up his guest. The giant frame and exceeding height of the man had made him look old as he first appeared outside in the sunlight. Now, as he sat humped over, his face flushed and half asleep from unaccustomed heavy feeding, it was evident that after all he was little more than a boy—twenty-six or thereabouts. He had that half-pathetic, half-humorous look about the mouth which hovers in a man's face until he reaches his prime and then goes. But his face was the face of a fighter, boyishly brutal; his nose had been broken; his jaw was pugnacious: a fighter with fists but no fighter with fate, he was badly licked. The hotelkeeper breathed through his mustache, his full cheeks holding his face in the verisimilitude of a smile. He was a judge of the outsides of men, their personal peculiarities and dispositions; doubtless he was unaware of any of the other qualities of men. His eyes twinkled kindness, for he liked such men as this tramp.

The tramp nodded and slept. The hotelkeeper nodded and slept. There was not so much difference between the two. The golden hours of the afternoon slipped away; the clock in the steeple of justice clanged the hours with spirit; the streets echoed and echoed with traffic; but they two, the prosperous son of idleness and the beaten son of toil, slumbered and slept.

At the stroke of five the hotelkeeper yawned loudly, roused himself and picked up his cigar from the floor. The tramp gaped, started up and gazed about him stupidly.

"Hell," he said. "I forgot wher' I wus." He stretched himself, scratched his ribs and got to his feet. Then he stooped and looked through the window. "It's gittin' late," he said. "I reckon I better be a-gittin' along to'rds the city."

Dad Colburn was looking at him thoughtfully and kindly. "Looky here," he said in his low twanging guttural, "you don't want to go on to that there burg. Like enough they've heerd o' you,



there in the factories. I've heard o' you. Yer name's Sam Smiley, ain't it? Yep. You can't git no job there. Besides, look at yer clothes. 'Course, I know yer all right, but then—now looky here, I got a little liv'ry stable back o' the hotel here, a liv'ry stable and gairage, and I c'n use a man in there jist to sort o' swab around and feed and onhitch, and back automobileels in and out and sich-like. Tell you what: you stick around fer the winter and work fer me and I'll pay you five dollars a week and yer grub and bed. It ain't much but, as the feller said, it's better than nothin'. Whaddayu say?"

For a while the man who had admitted his name to be Smiley remained in a gloomy silence, standing by the window. Dad Colburn, with more animation in his face than he had shown the entire day, sat and waited for an answer. After some moments Smiley muttered:

"Aw, I ain't no—I'm a mechanic, a expert!" A flush had crept up his neck. If anyone that morning had offered him such a chance he would have taken it with joy, but such is the power of food to revive hope, that now, without knowing it, he again thought of his rehabilitation as a possibility. Still, he could not forget himself. He looked down at his shoes and began to fumble at his wrinkled coat. He looked through the window. The shadows were getting long and there was a rusty tinge to the late sunlight. The wind, which blew little chips and straws along the street, made thereby a hissing, foreboding sound. It would be cold weather in a number of weeks. He looked at his benefactor helplessly.

"All right," he said, "I'll take it—much obliged fer the chanst."

Without any more palaver than the foregoing Smiley became an appendage of the hotelkeeper's household, and the following morning blossomed out in a new cheap suit of clothes and a pair of shoes that squeaked like a new set of harness. He fell into whatever tasks there were to be performed about the stable willingly enough; but the dull red that had crept up his neck apparently had come to stay. While he was a tramp

Smiley had had the satisfaction of being desperate—with the desperation of one kind of martyr. Now he had wittingly given up that interesting role to play dry nurse to horses for a place to sleep and enough to eat, and he was red with shame. He told himself that it was not for long, but meanwhile he was red with shame.

For the hotelkeeper had not driven any shrewd bargain and Smiley knew it. He was not so badly needed in the stable. Stumbling about in the haymow for feed, currying in the morning, tasks in which he was assisted by the stable boy, who had formerly done it all himself, Smiley continually bothered his head over the why of Colburn's generosity. To tell the truth, the reason was so simple it might have escaped anyone. Colburn, the natural dispenser of hospitality, had projected his landlordish wing over the big raw hobo because he liked him. That was all. It was just a case of a boy and a stray dog. Of course the hotelkeeper really thought he needed the man: his judgment was always silent before his likes and dislikes. Smiley told himself morning, noon and night, every time he sat himself down to the steaming table in the back dining room and endured the curious glances of the colored girls, that he would save up a piece of money and light out. It was one thing to beg a handout; it was another thing to eat a man's grub day after day, take his money and not earn it. He grew fat in the face; he began to look once more like a man, a live human being with a certain force and ability; but he couldn't look anyone around the town or the hotel in the face. Several times he halfway broached his mental predicament to Colburn, but the hotelkeeper would only say:

"Aw, pshaw, Smiley, stick around. I need you there in the stable. Wait a while—wait a while." And then he would inveigle his big lumbering protégé into a game of cards. To tell the truth, if Colburn had no more motive at first in sheltering the man than the gratification of a mere animal affection, he had a motive before the tramp had been under his hospitality long, for just as a stray



dog may have a trick or two by which to secure himself in the affections of his new master, Smiley, the hotelkeeper found in the course of an evening or two, had a versatile knack at cards—picked up, he said, during the Spanish War. He knew all the games the hotelkeeper knew and more besides. As an idle man the hotelkeeper had hard work to keep himself supplied with agreeable companions, and no sooner was he aware of Smiley's accomplishments than he hastened to take advantage of them. Not a night passed without a two-hour session of cards; and as the weeks passed and cold weather came on Colburn began to encroach upon Smiley's hours in the stable for the sake of the amusement of his company; and for hours at a time the sleepy drone of their voices would come out to Wally the clerk, calling the score, always calling the score and pegging up. Dad Colburn never got tired.

The middle of November came, and Smiley, grown as husky as a cornfed steer, could stand it no longer. He was licked when he came, but now—said he to himself—he had his courage back. The call of the greasy factories was in his ears, the call of a man's job, of clanging tools, the sociability of an automobile test room. He hankered for the smell of burned gasoline and the feel of hard oil on his thumb. He hungered to vindicate his manhood. The keener the wind of winter grew, the keener grew his desire and the deeper grew his shame for himself and the beggar's job that he held.

The hotelkeeper, knowing nothing of his state of mind, not knowing, perhaps, that there was such a thing as a state of mind, intercepted Smiley every evening as he rose from the supper table.

"Come on, Smi'," he would say childishly; "'beat you this evenin'." What'll it be, cribbage er koon-kan?"

Colburn had grown so fond of the big man with the broken nose that he looked upon him as his best friend; but his liking was not unmixed with patronage, for he could not forget that he was his benefactor, that he had saved him from starvation and fed him to a prime condition. Therefore, without intending to, he began to dominate the man, to dictate

his amusements and the time he should spend at them, to rob him of his work, which was Smiley's only solace. It was a case of a vigorous and willing worker being caught in a trap of benevolence and compelled to tread the wheel of idleness. He was being starved by the man who fed him.

"Aw, I ain't no good," Smiley would mutter sometimes. "I'm licked, I reckon. I ain't got the nerve to dig out and leave this dump." Then he would drag out from under the bed the canvas bag with the handle at the end. It contained his automobile tools, a comprehensive collection of wrenches, tweezers, keys, and a valve grinder which he had made himself. He would unstrap that roll and fondle the tools affectionately.

One morning after breakfast he appeared before Dad Colburn with the toolbag in his hand. His face was a trifle red and he stepped uneasily about in the office while the hotelkeeper scanned the morning paper.

"Looka here, Mister Colburn," he broke out at last, "you've been durn good to me, an' I reckon I 'preciate it some, but I cain't stan' this here settin' around no longer. I ain't no—I'm a mechanic, a expert. I'm—"

He stopped uneasily, looked down at his feet, swayed from side to side like a small boy saying a piece in school, and muttered in a sort of sing-song: "So, ef you ain't got no kick comin', I reckon I'll be a-gittin' along down the line—git a man's job . . ."

For a moment Colburn stared in undisguised consternation at Smiley; but he saw the man's painful state of mind, and being disposed above all things to act with tolerance and complaisance toward everyone and everything, he presently waved his hand with extreme good humor that was not unmixed with a certain sort of chagrin.

"Aw, that's all right," he said; "if you want to git out wher' there's room accordin' to your strength, w'y, go ahead. I know how it is—I was young once myself. Well, you jist do as you please—sorry to have ye go, but jist do as you please."

He paused, looked at the end of his



cigar, licked a loose piece of tobacco into place, and added:

"But if you git up against it, w'y, thunder, jist come back here. Yer wel-come, Smi'."

It was a reasonably warm day in November. The sun was shining and the light on the roofs was warm, so Smiley concluded to walk to the city; he would save carfare and he thought the fifteen-mile ramble would loosen up his joints and set his blood going. He started out with a buoyant stride, without looking back, swinging his toolbag and his little bundle of clothes.

In the distance hung a flat cloud, black and heavy; that was the soft coal smoke of the busy city, and up out of the flat cloud went one thin straight column, like a tall tree towering above a squatty forest, from some taller, heavy-draught stack. That smoke made him tingle. He was going to work.

It was a little after noon when he set foot on the pavements. In the country the air was reasonably mild and still; but a city acts upon the atmosphere like a composite chimney: the streets are its flues, so a harsh wind blew upon Smiley, now in his face, now at his back or at his side, and eddied the dirt and chaff of the unswept street into his face. The sky, because of the smoke, seemed overcast with clouds. The greensward between the street and the sidewalk was littered over with rotted leaves; and the houses and narrow lawns he passed were squalid, ill kept and dingy with the factory smoke which enveloped the town like a fog. Smiley, having been in the country and country towns for a good many months, used to faces that were instinctively neighborly, informal manners and a countrified landscape, hardly adjusted himself to his new adventure. The unfamiliar clanging of the trolleys through the empty residence streets; the cold, indifferent people in black clothes and pasty complexions who passed him; and, above all, the feeling that he was engaged in an uncertain enterprise, reacted upon him as it would upon a child. He felt lonely and rather at sea. The romance was oozing out of his quest for a job. He hurried along, conscious that

he had no overcoat and that the air was chill and damp. He was hungry, too. Seen from a distance, this going to get a job had promised the excitement of a lark, the joy of deliverance. Now he began to remember his experience on coming out of the penitentiary. That also was like a lark at first; but how soon had it degenerated into a stray dog's scrabble for scraps!

Still, he had some money now, and he was fairly sure that no one in this town knew him. He pushed on, and in half an hour had penetrated to the region of manufactories and the sort of industry that appealed to him. He was intensely hungry by now, and at last, seeing a saloon that advertised a hot meal and a glass of beer for twenty-five cents, he went in and sat down at a coffee colored table.

It was a poor-looking place, he thought, compared to the spick and span Palace Hotel dining room back at Mattsville. A barkeeper in a spotted apron cast upon him a dull eye and waited sullenly while he gave his order. In the back of the room a group of men, black and white, sat around a table in the poor light of an alley window playing seven-up with cards that fell on the table when they were dealt with a damp thud. Smiley gobbled the food as quickly as possible, gulped down the beer, paid the bill and went out.

The short afternoon was wearing to a close and Smiley stood on the curb, irresolute. Nothing had happened; he had met no rebuff; no one had paid any attention to him. But the chill of dread had crept to his bones. Moreover, without quite knowing it, he had two pasts to live down: the past of his defeat and that of more recent date, the days of idle security under the childish benevolence of the hotelkeeper. The former had made him afraid, the latter weak.

It was too late in the day to look for a job, and he decided to hunt some cheap lodging house. He walked aimlessly along, paying no attention to where he was going. No lodging house presented itself to his listless gaze. At last he found himself back in the business section. It was four o'clock now;



dusk had fallen and the lamps were being lighted. Smiley stood on the corner and considered, shivering a little. Where should he go now? The question seemed momentous. The food he had eaten in the saloon had done him no good and he was hungrier than before. He was chilly. He concluded that he must cut a ludicrous figure, for people glanced at him askance as they passed. Such little circumstances, which would have meant nothing to him had he had any sort of a feeling of place and security, weighed upon him. He felt that he encumbered the earth.

There was little mystery about his condition. His courage had oozed away. The prospect of beginning the fight over again, with no one to boost him along, and with the alternative always at hand of going back to the Palace Hotel, was too much for him.

He was standing on a corner passed by the tracks of the interurban trolley system that criss-crossed the State, and presently he saw one of the red cars that ran by Mattsville pull up at the corner and stop while the conductor ran forward to change the switch. The car was homeward bound and through the windows he could see some people he knew by sight.

"Aw, hell," Smiley muttered and passed his hand across his eyes, "what's the use anyhow? Might 's well sleep to home—come back tomorroy."

He hung his head and walked toward the car.

At a quarter after five Dad Colburn laid aside his evening paper and stooped to shovel some coal into the stove. A step sounded at the door, and when he turned, there stood Smiley, grinning a little but terribly embarrassed.

"Hello!" he chuckled, scrambling to his feet. "Come back, eh! That's right, boy, that's right. I knowed you'd come back—and jist in time fer supper."

Smiley did not go to the city the next day, nor the day following. Something within himself whispered to him that he was beaten, and he almost accepted that whisper as an irrevocable decree. The effect of this upon him, if subtle, was none the less marked. He became, a

little at a time, more or less of a slouch at his work in the stable; he no longer tried to avoid the hotelkeeper's invitation to play during work hours, but welcomed it. He no longer looked at his tools before he went to bed. He had kicked them into a corner.

At times he underwent a revulsion of feeling and cursed himself for a quitter; and twice, each time when the hotelkeeper was away on some trivial business, he sneaked away to the city on an afternoon car. But each time he came back. It was that bright warm dining room, the good food, the cheery, noisy, homelike hotel that tempted him back. He owned it to himself. Here was a home at least. Where else was there one for him?

In the early spring a friend of Colburn's in the employ of the telephone company stopped at the hotel over night. He was superintending the stringing of some wires on the poles from Chicago to the city, and he happened to mention to the hotelkeeper that he needed another man or two to complete the few days' work on schedule time. They paid men three dollars a day and their board to climb poles. In his good-natured desire to help him earn a little extra money, Colburn told Smiley of the job. He took it, more because it was offered than because he wanted it, and the next morning put on a pair of climbing spurs and joined the line gang.

It was rather chilly work but he liked it. It got the blood going in his veins again, and he developed a tremendous appetite. He liked the men he worked with and he liked his boss. He began to feel again that he was something of a man.

At the end of the fifth day they carried the line into the city and connected it with the city conduits. That night they stayed in a cheap boarding house and ate a supper of dried food products that was as hay to a leopard. The bed Smiley slept in was hard and cold and insufficiently supplied with cover, and he dozed in goose flesh and formless dreams the night through. The boss had informed the gang that he had received further orders and that there was



work in the city for all who desired it, and Smiley had gone to bed thinking he would stay with the gang; but he got up in the morning with his courage in the soles of his cold feet.

"Aw, I do' know," he said to the boss after breakfast; "I reckon I better git along back home." He had remembered that he had left his bag of tools in the hotel, and that gave him a good excuse to go back. So he took his pay and quit the gang.

It was about ten o'clock when he stepped into the lobby of the Palace Hotel. The last breakfaster had gone and the girls were putting fresh cloths upon the tables, but their usual chatter was remarkably subdued and hesitant. Wally was at the desk, and he looked rather quizzically at Smiley, but continued looking over some bills he had in his hand without saying anything.

Smiley went and opened the door of the back office. The room was empty. The hotelkeeper's old brown hat hung on a nail. The stove was cold. A half-smoked cigar lay on the corner of the desk as if it had just been left there. Smiley went back to the desk.

"Wher's Mister Colburn?" he asked.

Wally kept on at his aimless fumbling with the papers for a while. At last he replied: "Dead."

Smiley's jaw dropped. "What the—" he began.

"Fact," Wally cut in; "he died—sudden. The day you left. Ap'plexy, or something. He et too much, Doc said. A relative of his is coming from Sandusky next week to take charge here."

After a little while Smiley went up to his room. His toolbag lay in the corner. It was covered with dust. He picked it up and carefully brushed it off.

A few minutes later some of the aged and idle citizens of the town who were loitering on the corner by the postoffice saw Smiley emerge from the hotel and

come down the sidewalk toward them. He carried his toolbag in the crook of his arm and was rolling a cigarette.

"Ther's that ther' bum that's bin a-hangin' 'round the Palace Hotel all winter," said the first aged citizen.

"I reckon he's plum dumfounded now that he's done lost 'is meal ticket," said the second.

"What's he got in that ther' gunny sack? That's what I'd like to know," said the third; "nothin' good, I reckon. He looks like a' on'ry houn' to me. Ef I had *my* way—"

By this time Smiley was so near them that further comment was risky. He passed them without a look sideways, with a deliberate and easy stride. There was something in the manner of his walk that suggested the easy and unconscious gait of some animal in the isolation of his native habitat—something imperturbable and unhurried, as if he might be aware that existence, although lonely and precarious, is graced with power.

He cut diagonally across the street toward the old covered bridge, beyond which could be seen the country road that led to the city. He struck a match on his sleeve as he walked, lighted his cigarette and presently blew a great two-horned cloud of smoke from his nose.

The shadow of the bridge swallowed him up as a dry leaf is swallowed by a black pool. On the other side of the river the country lay broad and brown and sun-warm. The air was mild and the crows stood on the fences and cawed with great gusto. It was a pleasant day and a pleasing landscape, but Smiley paid no attention to these things. Ahead of him on the horizon lay a flat, black cloud, and up out of it, tall and thin, like a lofty tree towering above a squat forest, rose one plume of smoke. Smiley kept his gaze fixed upon it and walked without hurry and without hesitation.



IF there is one thing that bores a woman above another, it is to have a lover who imagines her incapable of any indiscretion.



# THE TRUANT WAYS

By Clinton Scollard

I SING the truant ways of spring,  
Their budding and their bourgeoning;  
The tint upon the briar that shows  
The crimson presage of the rose;  
The trillium's cup, the violet's eye,  
Blue-irised like the morning sky;  
The woodsy attar and the myrrh  
Distilled by sod and fern and fir!

I sing the truant ways of spring,  
And all their lyric beckoning;  
The bird that o'er the valley calls  
With honey-throated madrigals;  
The lilt and laughter of the rills,  
Those vernal heralds of the hills;  
And that rapt voice, so clear and pure,  
The wind, the earth-old troubadour!

I sing the truant ways of spring,  
The lure that leads to following  
By hollow and by climbing height  
To haunts of unforeseen delight;  
My heart, uncinctured and set free,  
Is brimmed anew with ecstasy;  
So, like each growing, breathing thing,  
I sing the truant ways of spring!



EVERY rider thinks his own hobby a thoroughbred.



FATE is the last excuse.



## TWO

By Tarleton Collier

THE girl looked up into the face of her lover, tall above her, glanced at the perfect order of his modern apparel, touched his cheek with the tips of her fingers, and sighed.

"If we were the only people in the world!" she whispered.

She mused.

A sea rippled with a soft purr over the stretch of sand and then rolled back, and the white beach for a moment was alive with the gleam of moonlight on the film of water that lingered. Far out from the shore the illusion of life was more nearly truthful, the shining strip of moonlight on the water seeming to throb as to a great pulse.

But elsewhere the world was deadly still. Beyond the gently rising beach was a white cliff topped with a fringe of trees that were as immovable as if carved from rock, and black against the land and the sky. Around the circular shore the black fringe ran until far on each side, where distance thwarted the moonlight, it merged with the sky and the sea.

A quiet landscape, black and white and gold; dead, except for the throbbing sea and the sliding sands.

A man and a woman sat at the base of the cliff and looked out over the water into the gleaming moon. His arm was around her shoulder, and his free hand held both hers.

For several hours they sat at the base of the cliff. The moonlight on the water, at first a brilliant lane extending from the shore to the far horizon where the moon and the sea kissed, widened and dimmed as the great orb rose.

Once the woman shivered, and the

man's arm tightened about her. No sound passed between them for hours. Once the man turned toward the woman, as if to speak, but seemed to change his mind. He kissed her, instead, and then turned again to look out over the sea.

The moon rose. The world lightened. After a while, with a common impulse, the two rose, and turned their faces toward an opening in the cliff. Hand in hand, they mounted a slow ascent, and in a few minutes were in the dim woods.

Through the forest, as they walked, wild creatures scurried, with a swishing patter of feet. One, of larger bulk than the others, walked slowly from the path of the man and woman, and several feet away turned to growl at them. The woman's hand tightened in its clasp on the man's, and his fingers answered hers assuringly.

They came at last to a little hut, whose walls were of intertwined branches on which the thick leaves still clung. The man stooped under a low opening in the wall, went within, and returned bearing a long rock-tipped spear.

He bent to the woman's face. She flung her arms about his neck and clung passionately to him, while they kissed with lips full and straining. He moved to go away, but her arms still clung, and he was forced gently to unclasp her hands as he kissed her again. Then he walked off into the forest.

Several times he turned and looked at her as she stood at the hut. Each time he waved his hand. She, her eyes never moving from his figure, waved in answer, until he was lost among the trees that thickened with the distance.

Then she sat down to gaze intently toward the spot where he had dis-



appeared. She sat very still, her fists doubled, her body rigid, her eyes wide and unblinking.

Once, after a long time, the scream of a wild animal rose in the distance. Her hand went to her heart, and through her parted lips the heavy breathing bore the sound of a moan.

Following the scream at a short interval came another, and then another; then a general hubbub, which sounded to the shivering woman as if all the wild creatures of the forest were fighting—over something.

The sight of just such battles had come often to her. She and the man sometimes had laughed at the snarling beasts as they scratched and bit at one another over the dead body of one of their kind. But more often she had shuddered at the sight of the torn and bleeding mass that was the cause of the combat. Always the vision of the red shreds of flesh remained with her for days afterward.

There must be a capital prize for the beasts this time. Her blood ran cold with their screechings, and with the fearful thought she was afraid to admit, even to herself.

Then she lifted her head at a heavy crashing in the bushes at her side. She went palsied at the sight of a tawny muzzle that was thrust toward her through a clump of leaves. Two beady, black eyes fixed hers, and she could read the cunning and desire of the wild thing in their glittering intensity.

With her eyes fixed still on the terrible black beads before her, she crept backward to the hut, feeling for the door with hands and body. As she stole backward, a red tongue slid out between the lips of the great tawny thing, and lapped up and down. It was the sign of the beast.

She found the door, and dodged within the hut. Once inside, she flung an armful of dry brush, faggots, rushes and small limbs into the opening, and strengthened the flimsy barricade with a great log. Then she leaned against it with all her weight.

Through a chink in the slender wall of the hut, she saw the great brown beast now altogether in the open,

frankly standing with calculating eyes upon the hut, its long, ponderous tail switching back and forth.

She saw it stalk nearer, and her tautening muscles were keenly alive to the first tentative brush of its nose against her slim defenses. Then she felt that a greater force was necessary, for the nose pushed far into the clump of brush, now against the very log with which she held it all in place.

Then there was a lunge by the beast, and the woman felt the log give way at one end and slip downward. Her muscles were aching with the strain, now, of holding back the heavy body.

Now the black, intense eyes gleamed through the veil of dried brush. Now the nose wormed its way closer. Now a fetid breath came faintly to her cheek.

The woman realized, somewhere within her being, that the din had died that once she heard afar in the forest. The tawny head was closer now, the crushing weight was irresistible. The breath of the beast was hot on her face. Her eyes closed.

Suddenly the pressure from without relaxed. Deliberately she slackened her resistance, more than half willing that the menacing monster be no longer gainsaid. But the unexpected lunge and rush of the dark body did not come. She wondered, eyes closed, body expectantly tense.

A shout sounded outside, and its raucous note made her world light and bright and beautiful once more. With the agony of restored happiness she screamed, and plunged through the shelter, out into the daylight.

The man was there, radiant with strength and power. At the sight of the deep-traced terror in her face, he flung to the ground the body of an antelope he had borne across his shoulders, and leaped to catch her in his arms. For minutes he held her tight, muttering unintelligible reassurances in her ears.

The lover looked down at the girl in his arms, at the soft shimmer of her charmeuse gown, at the gleaming diamond on her breast.

"If we only were!" he whispered, and crushed her closer.



# IF THE GAME BE STRAIGHT

By Dorothy H. Brodhead

TROWBRIDGE was after his man. Furthermore, he knew that he had him. He closed the books, replaced them in the vault and sprang the combination. Then he turned coolly to Postmaster Harlan, who was watching him. "The slickest piece of work I ever unraveled," he said; "but tomorrow someone will know that I, too, can play a game."

Harlan, who was small and wiry and distinctly nervous, made no attempt to conceal his agitation. "Just where is the leakage?" he asked excitedly.

Trowbridge, who was long-limbed and muscular and distinctly imperturbable, dropped casually into the opposite chair and lighted a cigar before he answered. "Your leakage is in the money order department, and it is due to a cleverly devised scheme, although it is simplicity itself. All money orders have been correctly issued, but occasionally one has been incorrectly entered in your records, and always for a smaller than the real amount. The resulting money differences between the real business done and the records shown are, of course, the amounts your clerk has realized by the fraud. But, since the money orders themselves are not retained here, and there was nothing but your records to go by, you can readily see that I've had a deuce of a time proving those records wrong."

Harlan stared moodily into space. "And I'd have trusted my money order clerk with any amount," he said regretfully. "How much do you think the entire shortage will be?"

"Probably about two thousand dollars. This embezzlement must have been going on for some months." He

took a slip of paper from his pocket and nonchalantly crossed to Harlan's side. "I haven't dared put my head into the office during the day for fear some of the clerks would scent me and my purpose, so I've never seen a bit of the writing actually done; but—you can tell—is this signature O.K.?"

Harlan looked at it: "'Clavrin C. Marston.' Yes, Trowbridge, I'm afraid it is."

"Afraid? Good heavens, man, one would think you didn't want this fraud stopped!"

Harlan moistened his lips with his tongue. "I'd rather it were anyone else," he said haltingly. "Perhaps, if you *had* been in the office, you would understand my feelings. My money order clerk—"

He halted, and Trowbridge stood silently studying the signature. It was young and rounded and boyish, with racy little flourishes on the capitals.

Then he replaced the slip of paper in his pocket and reached for his hat. "I gave up my dinner hour to work on these books. Now I think I'll look for something to eat," he announced cheerfully. His tone signified that discussion was at an end. "I'll be on hand the first thing in the morning," he added.

He closed the door almost silently behind him and went out across the deserted lobby into the street. There was no conveyance in sight, so he walked briskly in the direction of his hotel. He was deadly tired; tired of the ceaseless, straining brainwork and the long, grinding labor of the trail he had been following. He wanted pleasure; he wanted to be drunk with the spirits of some bubbling, frivolous joy; he wanted no



serious thought to even tiptoe across his sore and blistered consciousness until morning should bring its own distasteful task.

"A gay time," he muttered sarcastically, "in such a burg as this! And yet—it was while I was working here two years ago that I ran across that girl. Jove, I've seen some glorious women, but I'll swear she had 'em all beaten to a standstill. I don't believe she'd ever been in a decent-sized city, nor even seen a hotel waiter until that night."

He had reached his destination and, pushing open the swinging doors, he stepped into the glaring little lobby. It was the best hotel the town afforded, and he was in possession of its best room. He was covered with dust from his long rummage among old records, and he went to fulfill some visible requirements of respectability before entering the dining room.

At the end of the upper corridor, and just outside his door, there was a window which looked out upon a silver, moon-kissed world. Trowbridge halted wearily and looked out. Up the gradually slanting side of a mountain across the valley straggled a road, a pale, tortuous thread against the opaque blackness of the mountain. Trowbridge studied it. "The very road!" he said.

He remembered that he had been alone that night in his car, traveling at an easy rate of speed, and it had been just such a night as this. He could see again her slim, dark-clad figure ahead of him, walking in the short grass between the road and the fence. He remembered how tired her voice had been when he stopped and asked her to ride with him, and also with what perfect confidence and simplicity she had accepted his invitation. Then, because her quaint piquancy had amused him, he had kept her and driven on into town. And she had betrayed no thought of apprehension or wrong-doing.

Her heavy dress had been dusty and unlovely, and she had admitted, under his questioning, that it was decidedly uncomfortable. So he had stopped and aroused the manager of the only ladies' furnishing shop in Treverton, and pur-

chased a soft, lacy gown in her size. The twenty dollars in payment he had given without a second thought. He had needed amusement sadly and had been willing to pay for it.

At the hotel, he had left her in his room to make the change, and had waited for her on the queer balcony with its green plush furnishings while he listened to the little orchestra mutilate an ancient popular air. When finally she came to him, he had promptly given himself up to the intoxication of her beauty, and reveled in her thoughtless charm throughout the courses of the long, elaborate meal he had ordered.

Since then he had often wondered how anything so exquisite could develop in the surroundings among which he had discovered her, and always it was her manner rather than her appearance that puzzled him most. She had lacked all the superfluous courtesies which he had grown to hate, and betrayed only the simple correctness of a well brought-up child. And, each time he remembered her, he had been sorry that he had not ascertained where he might find her again. Tonight he was more profoundly sorry than ever.

He smiled, half whimsically, when he remembered how he had prepared her for the long ride back by wrapping her in the voluminous folds of his automobile coat, and how she had insisted upon being unwrapped again in order to obtain one last glimpse of her filmy figure in his long mirror. Then there had been a long two hours of racing through a moonlight which was like seafoam, and he had left her at a rude, unpretentious place which she had indicated, and, the last he had seen of her, she was standing on the doorstep, her whole face alight with wholesome, glowing pleasure. He had left her, too, with a pleasurable sense of having been honestly entitled to every ounce of his enjoyment—for he had treated her honorably to the last detail.

Now he stirred wearily, still gazing at the silver thread against the mountain, and wondered if, after having had dinner, he should hire Traver's little runabout and skim out over that road again



on the bare chance of being able to find her. Or was she married to some stolid, clumsy farmer in one of those queer, out-of-the-way shacks? In his heart he knew that she was not; that she would never have voluntarily bound herself to a life which he knew now must have been totally distasteful to her.

The long, straining day had tired his brain until it ached, and the blood was throbbing intolerably in his temples. He *would* have pleasure; he would wrest it from someone at any cost. He went into his room, called up Traver and received permission to use the run-about.

When he entered the dining room it was late, but there were still some people there—a chattering group at one of the central tables. When the waiter had taken his order, he employed the time by taking an impatient inventory of his surroundings. It was a showy room done in gold and white, and he let his eyes rove over walls and ceiling and furnishings, then abruptly brought them to a halt just as they were about to sweep over the party at the other table. Among them, sitting so that her face was more than three-quarters toward him, was the girl he remembered.

For a moment he stared unbelievably, his quick eyes taking in every familiar detail, from the well remembered glory of her pale gold hair—its shimmering luster augmented now by the dark, drooping plumes on her hat—to the long, graceful lines where her white throat merged into her supple shoulders. She was smiling frankly at something which was being said, while her slender hands fingered an olive with that unpretentious ease he remembered so well.

His first thought was that the pleasure of his ride was ruined, since he could not begin it with even a shadowy hope that he might find her. The second thought, following promptly on the first, was a stubborn resolve that he would not let her escape.

Before he was fully aware of his own intentions, he had risen, covered the distance between them in two noiseless strides, and was standing at her side.

Too late he remembered that he did

not know even a name by which to address her, that she had probably long since forgotten him, and that he had placed himself in an exceedingly awkward position. Then she became aware of his presence, looked up into his face and instantly knew him.

Her face lost its color and promptly flushed again. She put out her hand with the same easy, natural motion. "You!" she said. "My, but I'm glad to see you!"

He knew that she would not introduce him to her friends. She had too much tact to reveal the fact that she possessed no knowledge of his name. She turned partly away from the table and looked questioningly up into his eyes.

He had already taken her hand. "I couldn't resist speaking," he said, in his low, even voice. "This is the first time I've been in this part of the country since—since I saw you. But, tonight, I had made up my mind to start out and hunt for you. You see—say, I'm crazy to talk to you again."

She hesitated. The old adventure love crept back into her eyes. "Are you?" she whispered softly. "Our dinner party will break up soon. I might slip away and meet you somewhere, say on the balcony."

He nodded joyfully. "Fine!" he said.

He returned to his table and tried to eat, but his awakened anticipations had worn the edge from his appetite. When she left the dining room, a half-hour later, he forced himself to remain until a reasonable length of time had elapsed. Then he left his unfinished dinner and went out to join her.

"I have a motor," he informed her boyishly. "Just as that other time."

He flung his light coat across his left arm and, touching her elbow with the fingers of his right hand, guided her to the elevator.

The night was perfect, and once more they went spinning through that wonderful, maddening moonlight. He laughed from the sheer joy of living. He knew that he was perfectly happy.

She stirred sympathetically at his side. "It feels as though the breeze were blowing us straight to heaven,"



she murmured irrelevantly. "Do you think heaven will accept us?"

He laughed again. "That sounds just like you. You haven't changed a bit, have you?" he demanded gleefully.

She nodded solemnly. "Lots," she said.

He looked at her sharply. "Your clothes, yes. You yourself, no," he explained shortly.

"I, too," she corrected] gently. "Didn't you want me to change—some?"

He shook his head. "I don't think I wanted you to change—at all," he said lightly. "If I hadn't been so beastly busy, I would have come back to tell you so."

She laughed. "Time couldn't have altered me, if you'd only given your orders before," she said teasingly.

He promptly reduced the speed of the car and gave her his full attention. "Time! It's only two years. Honestly, I'm sorry they've changed you. Tell me about it."

She became serious at once. "You mustn't be sorry," she said gravely, "because it was you who made the change in me. In fact, I've hardly been in the mountains at all since the night I met you, and, before that, I lived there. And I had managed to be reasonably contented there, too. I don't see how I could have been; you know what a wild, lonely place it was. But nobody up there ever wanted anything different, so I suppose I never realized just what I was missing—until I found you. My mother was different from the neighbors because she had been a lady once, but then it's more than twenty years since she ran away and married my father, and twenty years on a back country farm is enough to drive the fineness out of any woman. She taught me to think and act as the rest of the people never thought and acted, but still I was closed in behind a door that shut me away from the whole world. You see, the night I went with you you opened that door for me. I just couldn't stay in the mountains after that."

She paused, and he gravely took advantage of her silence. "And I only

meant to give you one glorious good time," he said thoughtfully. "I didn't mean to make you discontented with your life."

"But you did," she rejoined gently. "The old farm was so rough, and my hands were red and hard from the work, and I kept thinking of the dinner and the automobile—and you. Oh, I simply couldn't stay."

He was wholly serious. "What did you do?"

"Oh, I had a common school education, so a friend of my father's gave me work in town. But even that hasn't seemed to satisfy me, because—because—may I say it?"

He nodded.

"Well then," she went on softly, "I've kept myself always among the nicest people and in the nicest places—because I knew that was my only hope of ever finding you again. It was a miracle that you found your way into my wilderness before, and miracles don't happen oftener than once in a lifetime."

He turned toward her lightly. "Don't jolly me. You've been having romances with lots of men since we had ours."

"Yes, but not the same kind. I've been more careful, because, since then, I've gained sense enough to know that most men wouldn't be as square with me, under such circumstances, as you were—and when I was such a child, too. Other men aren't as good as you are. Oh, believe me, I couldn't forget you—nor your kindness. If I'd known where to find you—" She checked herself.

Trowbridge moved uncomfortably. He wished she would select a more cheerful topic. "We *didn't* exchange any confidences, did we?" he agreed cheerfully. "Why didn't you ask me my name?"

She laughed. "I was afraid you would spoil all the romance by telling me it was Smith or Jones or Brown."

He laughed aloud. "It's worse than any of them," he said. "But I wouldn't think of being unchivalrous, and ladies are entitled to precedence. So first tell me who you are."

She gravely pushed a strand of hair out of her uplifted eyes. "I don't mind



telling you; but you'll think it a dreadfully funny name for a girl. It's Clavrin Marston."

Trowbridge nearly lost control of the wheel. A swift spasm passed over his face, and then it remained expressionless while he stared at the silver road ahead. He was seeing himself back in Harlan's office, studying that signature, with its racy little flourishes, while confused snatches of her sentences were running riot through his mind: "It was *you* who made the change in me . . . I was closed in behind a door that shut me away from the whole world—you opened that door." *He* had opened that door, in a thoughtless minute of pleasure seeking, and she had passed through it—into what?

He knew that she was waiting for him to speak, and, to gain time, "I think it a pretty name; and do you mind telling me how old you are?" he managed to ask.

And when she told him she was not yet twenty, he knew that it was the truth.

Suddenly he was looking back on that slip of a girl he had left standing on a country doorstep two years before. In a daze, he saw the passionate cravings he had awakened in her give place to a struggle for which she was incompetent, and the struggle give place to failure, and the failure to something worse. Then, because he was professionally skilled in the art of reading human life, he saw, beneath the depths of her girlish cravings, the love he had wakened in her soul; he understood her pitiful attempts to gratify its longing. The pulse of her life lay bare to his gaze, and he did not need to be told that she had spurned the help other men might have given her in reaching him and his level—merely because they were *other* men—and striven to reach him by her own unaided efforts. Again her words were ringing in his ears: "I kept thinking of the dinner and the automobile—and you. . . . Oh, believe me, I couldn't forget you."

He raised one hand automatically and pulled his cap farther over his eyes. He was dully aware that the girl was per-

plexed at his continued silence. He knew that any other woman would have broken in upon his reflections, and he knew, because she was more of a child than a woman, that she would not. Therefore he did not interrupt his thoughts to relieve her.

He had always been thoughtless, but no one had ever rightfully accused him of being cowardly or unjust, so now he was facing frankly the details of the case before him. According to the law, with its crooked, inadequate interpretations, this nineteen-year-old girl was guilty of fraud, but, if the game were straight and deeds counted for their proper value, he knew that the real crime lay with the man who, while professing to be fair, had weakened her life quite as much as though he had taken any other mean advantage of her ignorant girlhood. He saw clearly what he had done. Trowbridge had his man—and his man was himself.

Soberly, he tried to reason out what course to pursue. He could refuse to turn in his evidence on the case, and frame up some story which would satisfy the department. He remembered Harlan's attitude in the matter, and he knew instantly that Harlan would allow him to make good the loss and silence the affair. But doing so would only save her from this momentary danger, leaving her in the face of the same unequal, heartbreaking struggle; and that thought cut him to the quick. He could not offer her financial aid without insulting her. He turned and glanced down at her. The girl's eyes, beneath her glowing lashes, were fixed in troubled perplexity on the road ahead. She was beautiful, and her sin was less hers than his, and she loved him.

On a sudden impulse, he saw his one chance to help her, and he took it. In his after-reflections on his action, he acknowledged that he had taken it—gladly.

"Clavrin," he said gently, "if you've managed to be true to a memory of me for two whole years, don't you suppose you could be true to the real me for the rest of your life?"

She glanced up, startled. Then a



sudden tragedy leaped into her eyes; her hands clutched convulsively at his. "You can't mean—oh, you can't mean that—now! If you had only asked it before—before I— Oh, it is a mockery for you to say it *now*, because—I can't be crooked with *you*, and if I were to tell you the truth, you'd never ask it." Her voice broke. "I—I didn't think of that, before," she said.

His voice was low and quieting. "Listen, girl, I do know the truth, and yet I'm asking it."

"You do know? Who are you?"

He met her wavering eyes. "I'm the post office inspector who has been examining the embezzlement in the Treverton post office."

She shrank away from him, the open terror creeping into her uplifted face. "And you brought me out here to accuse me!"

He broke in: "I did nothing of the kind. Now listen: This is the only way in which I can help you. Can't you see

what it will mean if someone doesn't help you? I have some money, and I can easily make up the shortage, if you will give me the right. It's my debt anyway; it was I who really began the crime. Of course I didn't mean to, but that doesn't excuse me. I—I'm hoping I haven't done this same wrong to some other girl, but I don't believe I have, because I don't believe any other girl has really mattered since I knew you. I—honestly, I want you. This time we'll play fair—together—and you'll be square and so will I. Shall we, Clavrin?"

Her eyes slowly returned to his, and he saw that they were brimming with tears.

"Are you sure I can be quite honest, if I accept so much—" she began.

He stopped her.

"I'm being very careful not to open another door which will lead you to dishonor. This time, dear, the game can be straight."



## THE HOUSE OF DEATH

By Helen Cowles Le Cron

MY heart gleams white within the dusk,  
 And ah, the room is chill,  
 For Home is far as yonder star,  
 And you—are farther still.  
 The summer night thrills on outside  
 All sweet with lilac scent;  
 Two lovers wait beside the gate  
 To murmur their content.  
 Their world—the walk, the lilac tree—  
 Is Home—come joy, come pain;  
 For me, no world through spaces hurled  
 Can hold a Home again.  
 I built a Home long, long ago  
 And lingered there a while;  
 'Twas built with tears, with dreams, with years,  
 The fireside was your smile.  
 But now my hearth is white, is white,  
 And oh, the house is chill,  
 For Home is far as yonder star  
 And you—are farther still.



# THE DRAGON'S CLAWS

By Grant Carpenter

## CHARACTERS

QUAN QUOCK MING (*a fat old fortune teller. Wears a Chinese cap with a red button; very large horn-rimmed spectacles; very thin and short gray queue; purple silk blouse of the usual length; light green silk trousers tied at the ankles; white socks; Chinese slippers*)

FONG FAH (*his young wife. Wears costume of light blue silk trimmed with two rows of narrow black braid; hair dressed with many jeweled ornaments; gold, jade and ebony bracelets on both arms; white stockings; embroidered slippers with high heels in the middle of the soles*)

LOUIE KIM (*a young physician. Wears a Chinese cap with a red button; gold-rimmed spectacles; long black queue; wine-colored silk blouse of the usual length; light yellow silk trousers tied at the ankles; white socks; Chinese slippers; the little fingernails of each hand about two inches long*)

QUAN YOW (*a clansman of QUAN QUOCK MING'S. Wears a black straight-brimmed felt hat; black queue loosely braided at the back of the neck; ordinary black blouse; broad trousers rather short; white socks; Chinese slippers*)

TIME: *The present.*

PLACE: *Chinatown, San Francisco.*

SCENE—*The living room of a Chinese home. There are practical doors at center and left. An old-fashioned fireplace, from which the grate has been removed, is at the left of the center door. In the fireplace is an old kerosene can that has been converted into a stove by cutting slots in it and placing strips of sheetiron on top of it. A low fire is burning in the stove and a kettle of water stands on top of it. On the wall at each side hang a few cooking utensils. On the old marble mantel are the necessary China bowls, cups, etc. At the left of the fireplace is a small kitchen table or sink. Beside the center door stands a tall Chinese tabouret, upon it a basket containing the teapot. Beside the basket is the large bowl of water in which the teacups are kept. On the wall near by is a telephone. On the right of the stage is the family altar with the usual drapery, artificial flowers and decorations over it. At the back of the altar is a niche with an idol and before the figure a family tablet. On the altar are the usual metal vases, brass incense burner with punk in it, and the little oil lamp burning feebly. Beside the altar and against the wall is a chest. A little to the right of the center is a round table with a red oilcloth cover. On the table are Chinese writing materials, a water pipe, a Chinese book, a small kerosene lamp, a large reading glass, an abacus and a Chinese dulcimer. Three or four small*



## THE SMART SET

teakwood stools stand at the table. Chinese decorations cover the walls.

At the rise of the curtain FONG FAH is discovered sitting on a small stool near the stove embroidering. A light knock is heard at the center door. She starts and listens. After a short interval the knock is repeated. She hesitates, then rises and goes toward the door, showing mingled fear and pleasure. She raises her hand to open the door and again hesitates, when the knock is repeated, and she opens the door a very little.

LOUIE (*outside*)

May I not come in for a moment, Fong Fah? (*She opens the door a little more with evident reluctance, and he enters. She stands holding the door open as a hint that he is not expected to stay.*) I came to see Chin Tock again. He is very ill. (*She eyes him questioningly, and he closes the door while she still holds the knob.*) I could not go away without first running upstairs to see you for a moment.

FONG FAH (*moving away from him gradually and putting the table between them*)

You should not have come, Louie Kim. (*Slight pause*) I do not need a physician today.

LOUIE (*moving toward the table and facing her; during the scene he holds his hands so that his long sleeves will fall back and show his long fingernails*)

I did not come as your physician—today—Fong Fah.

FONG FAH (*startled*)

You—you know very well, Louie Kim, that—that a married woman cannot have friends.

LOUIE (*earnestly*)

Neither did I come as your friend, Fong Fah. (*Pause, while she looks at him questioningly.*) I came—as your lover. (*He makes a move as though to go nearer her.*)

FONG FAH (*shrinking back*)

No—no! You must remember that I am married, and my honorable husband—

LOUIE (*interrupting*)

Is not even your friend, Fong Fah. (*Slight pause*) He is merely—your owner.

FONG FAH

Yes, Louie Kim; I belong to him.

LOUIE (*bitterly*)

You belong to him, because he bought you—bought you as one would a chicken in the market, Fong Fah. He bought your body for a few pieces of gold, but he could not buy your heart—nor the treasure that lies at the bottom of it.

FONG FAH (*shaking her head slowly*)

No, he could not buy that.

LOUIE

It is your heart that I want, Fong Fah. (*He moves a little toward her, but she keeps the table between them.*)

FONG FAH (*in great agitation*)

No—no! Do not say such things to me. My honorable husband—

LOUIE (*contemptuously*)

A fat old teller of fortunes, who regards you merely as a piece of furniture in his household—kept only for his comfort and convenience! (*He rests his hands upon the table.*)

FONG FAH (*passionately*)

I know it, Louie Kim. What else can a wife be?

LOUIE

He did not buy your love, and—

FONG FAH

No—he does not even want it.

LOUIE

And it is still yours. (*He extends his hands pleadingly.*) Give it to me, Fong Fah, and I will return it tenfold.



FONG FAH (*greatly agitated*)  
No—no! I can't. Please go away!

LOUIE (*gripping the table cover, shaking the lamp; FONG FAH throws out her hands as though to keep it from toppling over, but sees that it is all right*)

You can't! Can't care anything for me, Fong Fah?

FONG FAH (*looking toward the door apprehensively*)

Oh, I'm afraid! (*She shudders.*) He's a terrible man, Louie Kim. He seems to see and to know everything. I even try not to think of you for fear that he will know.

LOUIE (*brightening*)

Then you have been thinking of me, Fong Fah?

FONG FAH (*pleading*)

Oh—no. Please go—and leave me.

LOUIE

I cannot go till you tell me.

FONG FAH

Tell you what?

LOUIE

That you are thinking of me—that you love me—a little.

FONG FAH

No—no! I can't tell you that. (*Slight pause*) Wait, Louie Kim. He is an old man—and we are both young. Wait—and—perhaps—

LOUIE

Will you think of me often and love me a little while I wait, Fong Fah? (*She hangs her head but does not answer.*) If you would do that I could wait—and wait—and wait.

FONG FAH (*looking up shyly*)

Then wait, Louie Kim—wait for me—and—

LOUIE

Oh, my lotus flower! (*He seizes her wrist and draws her toward him, upsetting one of the stools.*)

FONG FAH

Oh, don't, Louie Kim! (*She glances*

*apprehensively toward the door as she tries to loosen his grasp.*) Don't! Your nails are hurting me. (*He releases her. She draws up her sleeve and looks at her forearm.*) See the marks that you made.

LOUIE

Oh, I'm sorry, Fong Fah. (*He touches her arm tenderly.*) But you have put deeper marks upon my heart. (*She looks up at him shyly. He seizes her in his arms. She makes a slight resistance.*)

FONG FAH (*glancing toward the door again*)

No, no! Don't—please don't! (*She surrenders and he kisses her. She quickly shoves him away from her and looks toward the door again.*)

LOUIE

My little flower—

FONG FAH

Oh, please go! I'm afraid. (*She shrinks from him and again looks toward the door.*)

LOUIE

No harm shall come to you. I'd give my life—

FONG FAH

Listen! (*Both look toward the door and listen.*) I think he is coming! Go quickly!

LOUIE

Tell him that you were ill again and called me to attend you.

FONG FAH (*desperately*)

No, no! He will know. Go quickly! This way! (*She seizes him by the sleeve and draws him toward the door at the left. He goes reluctantly.*) Take the back stairway!

LOUIE

Good-bye, my lotus flower.

FONG FAH

Hurry! But go softly. (*He goes out. She runs to her stool, picks up her embroidery, quickly seats herself and begins sewing. The sound of a key is heard in the door and QUAN throws it open. He stands at the threshold scrutinizing the door jamb, first on one side and then on the other,*



*then takes in his hands the ends of a black thread that has been broken, one from each side of the door, and holds them up.)*

QUAN *(after a pause)*

Life hangs by a thread! *(He closes the door and stands frowning at FONG FAH, who glances up and then bends over her work.)* I ordered that the door be not opened to anyone during my absence!

FONG FAH

Why—I—I heard a noise outside—and opened the door to see what caused it.

QUAN

What was it?

FONG FAH

It must have been the wind, honorable husband.

QUAN *(eyes her for a moment, then goes deliberately into the room to the left.*

*FONG FAH watches him anxiously. He returns almost immediately and stands frowning at her)*

It is an ill wind that blows in at the front door and out at the back!

FONG FAH

I went to the back door, too, honorable husband—to be sure that no one was hiding in the hallway. *(It is becoming darker.)*

QUAN *(smiling incredulously, then turning toward the table and seeing the overturned stool)*

Why are the stools in disorder?

FONG FAH

I—I probably disturbed them in working about the table and forgot to put them in order again.

QUAN *(smiling)*

Light my lamp. *(He seats himself at the table and waits for FONG FAH to light the lamp, then takes up the book.)*

FONG FAH

Shall I pour you some tea, honorable husband?

QUAN

Not yet. *(She goes to the mantel, gets another small lamp, lights it and places it on a stool beside her, then seats herself and resumes her sewing. QUAN picks up the reading glass, and while pretending to read slyly examines the oilcloth cover of the table through the glass. Marks attract his attention, and he moves the lamp so as to get a better light upon them, holding the book so that FONG FAH cannot see exactly what he is doing. She glances up from time to time. He lays down the glass and fits his fingers to the marks; nods wisely and then glares at FONG FAH malignantly.)* Come here! *(He eyes her savagely for a moment, while she comes and stands with downcast eyes.)* How came these marks here? *(He points at the table.)*

FONG FAH

What marks, honorable husband? *(She instinctively pulls down her sleeve.)*

QUAN *(looking quickly at her arm; he straightens and reflects an instant)*

Is it true that you have pawned your bracelets?

FONG FAH

No, honorable husband; I still have them.

QUAN

Let me see them. *(She quickly draws up one sleeve and then the other, giving him a glimpse of them.)* Come here! *(She goes nearer.)* Let me count them. *(He takes her by the hand and draws her closer, raises one sleeve and then the other to the elbow and discovers the nail marks upon her forearm.)* Hai-ie! *(He flings her hand away.)* The dragon must have ridden on the wind, for I find the marks of his claws here *(indicating the table cover)* and again here! *(Pointing at her arm)* Did the dragon try to carry you away?

FONG FAH

I saw no dragon, honorable husband.

QUAN

Then how came those marks upon your arm?

FONG FAH

Why—it pained me from sewing so



long—and I gripped it for a moment in my hand—this way. (*She illustrates.*)

QUAN (*stretching his hand toward her and drawing her to him; he pulls up her sleeve again and looks at the marks, then glances up at her and smiles*)

I certainly thought that your thumb grew on the other side of your hand, Fong Fah. (*He releases her hand and shakes his head.*) No; it must have been a dragon, for the claw on its fourth toe is always much longer than the others. Of course you did not see it, Fong Fah, for it possesses the power of making itself invisible. (*Slight pause.*) But we will waste no more words upon it. Return to your work.

(*She goes, obviously relieved.* QUAN folds his hands over his abdomen, leans back on his stool and meditates; unfolds his hands, spreads his fingers and looks at them; folds his hands over his abdomen and meditates again; unfolds his hands, closes all but the little fingers and looks at them. Then he gets an illuminating idea and nods decisively. He rises and goes to the telephone.)

The Harmony and Good Will Gambling House. (*Pause*) Is that the Harmony and Good Will Gambling House? . . . Is Quan Yow there? . . . No; tell him to come upstairs quickly to the home of Quan Quock Ming, the promoter of happiness and longevity. . . . Yes. (*He hangs up the receiver, returns to the table, turns the lamp very low, seats himself again, folds his hands over his abdomen and leans at FONG FAH, who glances up from her work from time to time. The sound of light footsteps is heard on the stairs, followed by a ring at the door.*) Open the door, Fong Fah. (*She opens it, and QUAN YOW stands on the threshold, bowing with clasped hands.*) Come in, young nephew. (*FONG FAH closes the door and returns to her work.*)

QUAN YOW

It is dark here, venerable uncle.

QUAN (*nodding*)

Sit down, young nephew. (*QUAN takes a stool.*) Darkness has indeed descended upon the clan of Quan—but you are to be the bearer of light.

QUAN YOW

What shadow has fallen, venerable uncle?

QUAN (*impressively as he shakes his head*)

The heaviest—the blackest—that can fall upon any family. (*Pause*) And all of the family of Quan must hang their heads in shame till it is lifted.

QUAN YOW

Aih-yah! What a great calamity! (*He shakes his head and clicks his tongue.*) What is to be done, venerable uncle?

QUAN

The shadow must be lifted. (*He shakes his head and clicks his tongue.*) The cloud must be removed—in the usual manner. (*FONG FAH listens closely, though pretending to work.*)

QUAN YOW

Why did you send for me, venerable uncle?

QUAN (*leaning forward; impressively*)

That you might bring light where all is now darkness, young nephew.

QUAN YOW

Hai-ie! Why have I been selected?

QUAN

Because it must be done—soon.

QUAN YOW

Certainly. There is no other course. (*Pause*) But why does not the clansman, who has lost his face, boldly recover it? (*QUAN shakes his head solemnly.*) Is he a turtle, who hides his head under a lily leaf when a water snake invades his home?

QUAN

No, young nephew. He is a dragon—with claws. (*FONG FAH starts. After a pause*) But if he should show his claws, he would only advertise the disgrace of the family more broadly. No; it must be done by another—secretly.

QUAN YOW

Why does he not employ a fighting man to do it, venerable uncle? They ask no questions if the reward be ample.



QUAN

They would surmise—and whisper—and everybody would laugh at the family that is so weak that it is compelled to buy its face. No; you must do it, young nephew.

QUAN YOW

Hai-ie! (*He shakes his head.*) I am no fighting man, venerable uncle, but it is my duty to obey the elders of our family. It shall be as you say. (*Decisively*) Tell me the name, venerable uncle.

QUAN (*watching FONG FAH*)

His name is— (*He pauses and smiles as he observes that she has stopped sewing to listen.*)—Louie Kim. (*FONG FAH starts violently.*) The physician—with the long fingernails. (*QUAN, noting FONG FAH's agitation, nods as though all doubts were removed.*) What is the matter, Fong Fah?

FONG FAH

I—I—oh, I pricked myself, honorable husband.

QUAN

Pour tea for us. (*FONG FAH goes to the tea stand, takes the teapot from the basket, places cups before them and pours the tea with shaking hands, spilling a little of it.*) Hai-ie! What is the matter with you?

FONG FAH

I burned myself, honorable husband. (*She replaces the teapot and turns toward her sewing.*)

QUAN

Fong Fah! (*She turns and faces him. He turns the lamp a little higher and scrutinizes her critically while he sips the tea.*) You appear to be ill, Fong Fah.

FONG FAH (*with downcast eyes*)

No—no. I do not feel ill, honorable husband.

QUAN (*shaking his head*)

It is a great misfortune to have a wife who constantly requires the attention of a physician, and neglects her duty to her husband. (*FONG FAH hangs her head.*)

*After a slight pause*) Still, I think that I should call one for you.

FONG FAH (*quickly*)

No, no, honorable husband! Don't. I am quite well.

QUAN (*shaking his head gravely*)

No, Fong Fah. You surely need a physician. (*He rises and goes to the telephone. She watches him in terror, slowly backing toward her stool.*) Louie Kim, the physician. (*Slight pause.*) Am I speaking to Louie Kim, the learned physician? . . . Ha! I am Quan Quock Ming, the poor promoter of happiness and longevity. . . . Ha! Thank you, Sir Physician. I wish you a long life and great prosperity. . . . Ha! (*He nods and smiles.*) My wife has a fever again, Sir Physician. Would it be too much trouble for you to come and prescribe for her? . . . Ha! (*He nods and smiles.*) My gratitude, Sir Physician. (*He hangs up the receiver.*) FONG FAH *crumples down on her stool.* QUAN *goes to the chest, opens it, takes out a large revolver and examines it.* To QUAN YOW) These pills are not as large as some physicians prescribe, but they are even more effective. (*He hands the weapon to QUAN YOW, who hides it under his blouse as he rises.*)

QUAN YOW

Now I shall walk my way, venerable uncle.

QUAN

Walk your way slowly, young nephew, for the hallway is very dark, especially at the second floor—when the lamp is extinguished. (*He glances at FONG FAH and smiles.*) It sometimes happens that an ill wind blows it out. Remember, young nephew—the second floor—where Chin Tock lives. I want no foreign devil officials kicking at my door with their big boots. (*QUAN YOW opens the door.*) And be careful. The back stairway might be safer.

QUAN YOW

I shall be both careful and sure, venerable uncle. (*Both bow with clasped hands and QUAN YOW goes out.*)



QUAN (*turning to the teapot and pouring himself a cup of tea, standing with his back to FONG FAH while he sips it. She takes off her slippers and starts stealthily toward the door at the left, watching him. He listens with his head cocked a little to one side. Without turning to look at her*)

The key to the back door is in my pocket, Fong Fah. (*She makes a gesture of despair, creeps back to the stool again, slips on her shoes and picks up her sewing. QUAN deliberately rinses the teacup in the water bowl, returns to his stool, seats himself, folds his hands over his abdomen and watches FONG FAH with satisfaction.*) You should not work, Fong Fah, when you are not feeling well. Rest—and while you are doing so, sing to me. (*She rises wearily and goes to the table.*) I think I would like to hear one of the odes of T'sin. (*She picks up the dulcimer hammers.*) Yes—by all means—one of the odes of T'sin. (*She touches the strings of the dulcimer with the hammers to see that it is in tune.*) Sing "The Lady Lamenting the Death of Her Lover." (*She shudders, then plays the brief prelude. He leans back on his stool with his hands folded over his abdomen and watches her face, rocking himself slightly and nodding the time.*)

FONG FAH (*singing*)

My lover like the pine tree grew,  
And lordly was the mien he bore.  
(*Interlude*) Ah, me! (*Interlude*)  
But I shall see him nevermore.

My lover like the pine tree stood  
And bowed toward my humble door.  
(*Interlude*) Ah, me! (*Interlude*)  
But I shall see him nevermore.

My lover like the pine tree sighed—  
To me each breeze a message bore.  
(*Interlude*) Ah, me! (*Interlude*)  
But I shall hear them nevermore.

My lover like the pine tree fell;  
But still his shadow's on my floor.  
(*Interlude, during which a shot is heard downstairs*)  
But I shall see him nevermore.

(*At the conclusion FONG FAH stands with bowed head and the dulcimer hammers slowly drop from her hands to the floor.*)

QUAN

Very good, Fong Fah! Very good!  
(*Pause*) You sang that with much feeling. (*Pause*) I think you are cured, Fong Fah. Return to your work. (*She totters to her stool and crumples down on it. He picks up his book and prepares to read, then glances toward her.*) I believe I will have fried noodles for breakfast, Fong Fah.

CURTAIN



## HER GLOVE

By Charles Campbell Jones

THIS is the glove she used to wear—  
A scented relic white as snow.  
'Tis slender as her hand was fair  
In happy days of long ago.

Time's tragic changes bring despair—  
Alas, for pleasures done and gone!  
This is the glove she used to wear,  
And now she cannot get it on.



# UNLESS

By S. S. Stinson

**A** WOMAN always feels sorry for a man who has trouble with his wife—unless she happens to be the wife.

Distance lends enchantment to the view—unless you have to walk there.

Misfortune will sometimes drive a man to drink—unless drink has first driven him to misfortune.

Never hit a man when he is down—unless you are mighty sure he is down to stay.

Some men have no respect for old age—unless it is bottled.

We all rejoice in the good fortune of a friend—unless it exceeds our own.

A thing of beauty is a joy forever—unless it goes out of fashion.

It isn't necessary for a man to make a fool of himself over a woman—unless he does it before he is twenty-five or after he is sixty.

A woman isn't satisfied to do as she pleases—unless she can make everyone else do—as she pleases.

Never threaten to kiss a girl—unless you make good; most girls hate a bluffer.

If the shoe fits, wear it—unless you are a woman, in which event you will, of course, take it back and exchange it for a smaller one.



**T**HEY were discussing a new man who had just been put up for membership in the golf club.

"Is he a man of any prominence?" asked one.

"Well," said another, "he's the kind of prominent man who puts into his biography in 'Who's Who' the fact that he is a member of the National Geographic Society."



**"W**HAT does he write for?"  
"Rejection slips, I think."



**I**N choosing a husband always select a man who laughs heartily, for in him survives some of the glory of childhood.



# LA MAGUELONNE

Par E. G. Perrier

ILS sont partis, les pêcheurs de Paimpol, tout là-bas, sur la mer grande. Leurs barques frêles avec leurs voiles étendues ont l'air de mouêtes qui prennent un bain d'écume. Le vent siffle. Les vagues déferlent à grand fracas et sur le ciel, bleu tout à l'heure un nuage noir se forme, emplit l'horizon . . .

Sur la grève, la Maguelonne est debout, agitant fiévreusement son mouchoir en signe d'adieu . . . La Maguelonne est une belle fille aux yeux clairs dont tous les gars d'alentours sont amoureux; elle a dix huit ans à peine, mais elle porte davantage; on l'appelle "la petite fée," à cause de ses cheveux blonds qui lui font comme une auréole, à cause aussi du sourire avenant, mutin, avec lequel elle salue tous les gens qu'elle rencontre comme si tous étaient ses amis.

Cependant, en ce moment, la Maguelonne ne sourit plus: elle est triste, elle a peine à retenir ses sanglots . . . C'est qu'elle pense à Yannick son promis, qui s'en va tout là-bas, sur la petite flotille, vers la terre d'Islande . . . Elle sait que Yannick est très brave, c'est à dire très imprudent: n'est-ce pas lui qui, il y a huit jours à peine, s'est jeté à la mer, en pleine tourmente: à cet âge, on n'a pas assez peur de la mort, on se figure que toutes les audaces sont permises . . . Et la Maguelonne ne peut s'empêcher de frissonner en pensant aux mille dangers qui guettent les marins au large:

— "Sainte Madeleine, veillez sur lui!"

Et le petit mouchoir au bout des doigts blancs s'agite plus éperdument et le sanglot longtemps comprimé éclate enfin, déchirant . . .

Au loin, l'orage vient de se déchaî-

ner: une brume soudaine tombe, s'épaissit . . . voici la nuit noire au travers de laquelle rougeoient des éclairs . . . Là-bas, tout là-bas, les petites barques entrent dans la fournaise!

Dix mois ont passé . . .

Oui, dix mois déjà, depuis cette aube d'avril où les Terre-Neuviens ont pris leur volée!

Beaucoup d'entre eux sont revenus, hâves, amaigris, la bouche pleine de récits fantastiques et douloureux: l'expédition a été dure, la pêche mauvaise, et si les jeunes se résignent à sourire quand même en revoyant leur clocher, les vieux ronchonnent en pensant aux femmes et aux enfants qui vont peut-être souffrir de la faim . . .

Tous les matins, depuis dix mois, la Maguelonne revient sur la grève, et chaque fois qu'un pêcheur débarque elle accourt vers lui:

— "Où donc est Yannick?" — questionne-t-elle avec angoisse.

Mais personne n'a vu celui qu'elle demande . . . On se rappelle pourtant qu'il montait une goëlette peinte en bleu, couleur de rêve, sur le bordage de laquelle flamboyait en lettres d'or ce nom glorieux: "En avant!" En avant! n'est-ce pas la devise de tout marin? Là se borne ce qu'on en peut dire: la goëlette a pris le large avec les autres, puis, un beau matin, on ne l'a plus aperçue . . .

La Maguelonne se lamente: — pourvu, Dieu bon, que Yannick ait échappé! — Et bien que le silence attristé des hommes et les douces paroles des femmes lui laissent comprendre ce qu'on n'ose lui dire encore, elle veut espérer quand même. . . .

— "Il était si courageux!" — sanglotte-



t-elle, comme si le courage pouvait être de quelque sauvegarde dans le péril. . . .

Et les jours passent, puis les semaines, et elle a beau interroger anxieusement l'Océan: plus une voile n'apparaît au loin, plus même une carcasse désemparée que la marée montante rejette à la rive. . . .

Voici le printemps.

Le port est encombré de jolies barques toutes reluisantes sous leurs peintures fraîches. . . . Les pêcheurs s'assemblent par groupes, mais ils sont mornes, silencieux . . . plus d'un laisse sa pipe s'éteindre dans sa bouche. . . . C'est que demain ils vont à nouveau prendre le large, pour six mois,—pour toujours peut-être. . . . Yvan, le vieux pilote, l'a dit et on sait qu'il a l'expérience de la mer:—"attendre plus longtemps serait folie. . . ."

Pourtant, demain ce sera le jour de Pâques. . . . Demain, toutes les cloches du pays, réveillées dans leurs dômes de pierre, sonneront l'allégresse d'avril en fleurs; les filles s'habilleront avec leurs robes de fête et chanteront des complaintes d'amour . . . demain, ce sera la résurrection de la vie et du soleil!

N'importe! la côte d'Islande est loin et la mer est capricieuse—la petite flottille partira quand même, à moins cependant. . . .

Mais que se passe-t-il tout à coup?

Un gros nuage s'est levé au couchant, à perte de vue . . . en un instant, il monte jusqu'au zénith, éteint le soleil, et le vent qui hurle déploie à grands plis son voile noir. . . . Maintenant, on ne voit plus une étoile, on n'entend plus que le

tumulte étourdissant des vagues qui montent à l'assaut des falaises. . . . C'est la tempête, soudaine, échevelée, qui vient d'éclater. . . . Il fait froid. . . . Dans le port les petites barques, qui s'entrechoquent, semblent grelotter.

Et tandis qu'en hâte les pêcheurs ploient leurs filets et que les enfants s'enferment craintivement dans les cabanes, un grand cri, un cri d'épouvante et de mort résonne et domine le déchaînement des choses. . . .

D'où vient-il, ce cri strident, qui impose silence à la tempête?

Est-ce le sifflement d'une sirène en détresse ou le dernier appel d'un homme qui se noie? . . . Non! ce cri là vient de la grève, et c'est une femme qui l'a poussé. . . .

. . . La Maguelonne est couchée, privée de sentiment, sur les galets . . . les lames, en déferlant, viennent baigner son corps et couvrent de neige ses cheveux. . . . Elle est pâle, son cœur bat à peine . . . cependant, ses mains immobiles, rigides déjà, se crispent sur une chose noire, qui gît à ses côtés: c'est une épave, une planche à demi pourrie, sur laquelle se lisent ces mots: "En avant! . . ."

. . . Et le lendemain, à l'aurore naissante, quand le vol des anges, tournoyant autour du clocher, eut accroché le bourdon aux mille carillons, on le vit hésiter un instant, puis cueillir au passage une petite mouette blanche, qui s'était perchée tout en haut de la flèche: c'était l'âme de la Maguelonne qui avait pris cette forme pour s'envoler vers le ciel. . . .



**N**OUS croyons beaucoup à ces hommes qui ont mis la main sur leurs facultés et qui les ont forcées à se taire longtemps. Le silence est père de la pensée.



**L**E mariage aujourd'hui est la seule industrie de la noblesse.



# ROOSEVELT, BULWER-LYTTON AND ANTHONY COMSTOCK

By H. L. Mencken

THREE great playboys of the true, the good and the beautiful, and all of them hymned and osteopathed in current books—Anthony by one of his altar boys, Bulwer-Lytton by his grandson, and Roosevelt, of course, by himself. The mountebank political, the mountebank literary and the mountebank moral! *Hoch! Hoch! Dreimal hoch!* . . .

Anthony first—dear old darling Anthony, the *stammvater* and *capo comico* of all the smuthounds, snouters, sterilizers and antlered stags of rectitude—Anthony the chemically pure, bugaboo to the literati. Let me confess at once that I hold the fellow in honest veneration and, what is more, that I am frankly jealous of him. And why shouldn't I be, and the rest of the book-reviewing Camorra with me? He is an amateur who has invaded our craft uninvited—and attained to a power which puts the best of the professionals to shame. He is the most potent critic that ever pulled and hauled a literature. He has the fixed, immovable ideals of a John Wesley and the deadly puissance of a Caesar Borgia.

We who ply the trade, remember, are not content to be mere referees. We think we have done only half our job when we have turned the thumb up or down. What we aspire to is that constructive authority which is so much higher and more satisfying than the empty franchise to praise and blame. We want to see the poets and the novelists pay tribute to our penetration by taking our advice. We want them to write more and more of the stuff that

we think ought to be written, and less and less of the stuff that their native depravity inspires them to write. Alas, how seldom we get our wish! I myself, after years of laborious practice, can't point to a single author who has ever heeded my whispers, or even my whoops. One and all, they blunder along as if I had never sat up with them and prayed with them, and cautioned them and sworn at them, and tempted them with stick candy and threatened them with clubs—as if I had never existed!

Consider, for example, Will Levington Comfort, a novelist I admire for his gift of fluent and luscious utterance. This Comfort, in fact, can write like the very devil. But he wastes his talents writing vague New Thought dithyrambs on Mystic Motherhood, the Third Lustrous Dimension, the *Weltanschauung*, the *Zeitgeist* and suchlike fowl—and I roar at him and make faces at him in vain. Every time he appears in the ring with another volume of transcendental soul-searching, I drop all other concerns, however pressing, and devote my whole energies to wrestling with him. I denounce him, I cajole him, I plead with him. I try to weaken and wear him out with battering rams and assegais, and then to catch his recantation as he sinks to the floor. I pursue him with ridicule, scandal, threats, flattery. I try, by cunning arts, to appeal to his cupidity, his piety, his respect for my gray hairs and sclerotic knees. I crowd a dozen Indiana genii into a paragraph in order to make room for wooing him. I pour all the ardor of a Jonathan Edwards and all the eloquence of



a Bossuet into the solemn business of luring him up to grace. But to what end? To no end at all. The more I picture the charms of this earth, the higher Comfort ascends into his Lustrous Dimensions. The more I beseech him to stick to ordinary sinners, the stronger grows his taste for vestals and visionaries. In each succeeding book, in fact, he departs further from my counsel. His first was still one-third terrestrial; his last was almost wholly astral. In brief, the net effect of all my labor upon him has been less than nothing. For every practical purpose, the space I have so hopefully devoted to his rescue from skyhooting might have been more profitably given over to a treatise on Infant Damnation, or to the memorabilia of Orison Swett Marden, or to a century of limericks.

So with the other critics that I know. There was a time when William Dean Howells held up Dostoyefsky and Turgenev as models for all our lady novelists, male and female—and all our lady novelists imitated Dumas père and Anthony Hope. There was a time when all the college professors wept over Mark Twain's vulgarity—and Mark piled "Huckleberry Finn" on "Tom Sawyer." There was a time when the whole critical fraternity begged Richard Harding Davis to change at least a few of his "as thoughts" into "as ifs"—but Richard stuck hunkerously to his "as thoughts." And even today, despite the terrible lashings of the bachelor girls who compose the *Times Book Review*, Theodore Dreiser continues to fashion his books in the Dreiser way and not at all in the *Times* way. Let the critics plead and yammer as they will, the authors are wedded to their vices of style, grammar and psychology. They care not a single hoot for the whole worshipful company of reviewers.

No hoot, that is, for any save one. That solitary and sublime exception is A. Comstock aforesaid—and for him they care enough hoots to break the eardrums of an army corps. When Anthony sniffs and smacks his lips, they fall on their knees and strike their foreheads to the dust. When he looses a

yell, they reach for the bichloride tablets and send for the embalmer. He is to all other critics what the horrid behemoth is to a colony of *ædogonia*. He is the one American critic of national and indubitable influence, the one critic with an authentic wallop.

The reason thereof lies in what the jurisconsults and jail wardens call Title XLVI, Ch. III, Sec. 3893, of the Revised Statutes of the United States—the law, to wit, which makes it a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine running up to five thousand dollars and imprisonment up to ten years, to deposit any "obscene, lewd or lascivious book, pamphlet, picture, paper, print or other publication of an indecent character" in the United States mails. Anthony drew up that law himself and had it passed by Congress so long ago as March 3, 1873, and at the same time he had himself appointed a special Postoffice Inspector to enforce it. I have studied it with an open mind, but have found it, I regret to say, of indifferent merit as English prose. In point of fact, it labors under the capital defect of obscurity, for there is nothing in it to indicate just what "obscene" means. In this very literary blemish, however, lies all its critical horsepower. If the word were clearly defined, then the literati would know of a surety not only what it does mean, but also, and more important, what it doesn't mean, and in the latter field, no doubt, there would be room enough for them to stretch their legs. But Anthony, of course, was far too cunning to put in any such plain definition. The whole potency of the statute depends upon the fact that its meaning varies sharply from day to day, according as Anthony's cold in the head is better or worse and the jurymen before whom he performs aspire to Heaven or Hell. The result is that its menace is enormous, and that the discreet author is at the utmost pains to steer clear of it. The second result is that it rests upon American letters like a millstone upon the midriff of a medieval heretic.

I am not one, I hope, to advocate unrestrained freedom in books, no matter



what its theoretical advantages. I go pretty far, true enough—for example, Rabelais is a firm favorite of mine, and Congreve is another—but for that stupid nastiness which is wholly unredeemed by wit or truth or other valuable thing I have no more liking than the most austere Sunday school superintendent unhung. I know too much, however, about the effect of our prudish laws upon our national literature to view them with anything resembling patience—and what those laws are, dear old Anthony hath made them. I don't know a single first class novelist in the United States, at least of the indubitably male sex, who is not constantly threatened by them, who hasn't got the thought of them constantly in the back of his mind. If they were clear, if they were sensible, if they were honest, then the damage they do would be slight. But it is precisely because they are obscure and donkeyish and hypocritical that they constitute an evil and insidious influence. No self-respecting man wants to be put upon his trial for a violation of decency; no man who tries to write of life as he sees it, frankly, thoughtfully and manfully, is safe from that danger in this fair republic today. The consequence is that few make the attempt. Our national literature, and particularly our fiction, is inane and bloodless to the last degree. It no more represents the lusty and barbarous life around us than it represents the life of the Periclean Greeks. It deals almost entirely with stuffed dummies, denaturalized men and women, gaseous vertebrates. Its stock situations are unheard of in the real world; its emotions and ideas are those of marionettes. In brief, it is hideously false, trivial, vapid, pharisaical, childish, mawkish, musty, disgusting. The one true thing in it is the inference that we are a race of sentimental old maids.

For all this, blame our superstitious scouring of the outside of the platter, our apparently ineradicable Puritanism—of which, as I say, good Anthony may be hailed as the symbol and archetype, the chief snouter and self-consecrated pope. But though I thus revile him for

the evil that he has done, I may yet give him a full measure of veneration for the wholesale and ruthless way in which he has done it, and this I do very gladly. There is, indeed, something truly herculean about the methods and character of the man; he seems to belong to the great days of faith; there are hints in him of Calvin, of Loyola, even of Torquemada. One gets a good notion of his epic sweep and brawniness in "ANTHONY COMSTOCK, FIGHTER," by C. G. Turnbull (*Revell*), a disciple who views him with a devotion verging upon awe. He has scoured the whole country in his hunt for sinners; he has faced the most ferocious attacks without flinching; he has played the star role, in his time, in no less than 3,646 prosecutions. If all the books and pictures he has seized and destroyed were loaded upon freight cars they would fill sixteen of them. If all the persons he has arrested were to travel together by train, it would take sixty-one passenger coaches to accommodate them, each holding sixty passengers. Starting life as an humble drygoods clerk, he has come to threescore and ten as one of the most famous Americans of his time, a man as eminent as Bryan, Roosevelt, Harry Thaw or Jack Johnson, a perpetual invader of the first pages of the newspapers, the accepted representative of American life and American ideals among the peoples of Europe, the real Uncle Sam. Such an achievement, I take it, is not to be sniffed at. Such a man, whatever his follies, is not to be rated low.

Biographer Turnbull, apparently a prize pupil of the Sunday school himself, is disposed to see Divine Providence in all of Anthony's forays and adventures, even the least of them. Does he get a verdict of guilty from a jury of Tartuffes? Then the wires from Heaven are working well. Does he pass unscathed through a plot to crack his head? Then the Lord God has stooped down to help him. Is he still alive and kicking at seventy years? Then it is because the Devil is righteously punished by his survival. Alack, I fear that good Turnbull's piety has run away



with his perspicacity. I doubt greatly, indeed, that Anthony is really the marsh-mallow angel he makes him out. There must be something more to the fellow than mere snuffling and psalm singing. At the bottom of him there must be a considerable humanness, a saving weakness, perhaps a genuine sporting instinct. I cannot go over the chronicle of his heavenly cavortings without seeing a touch of keen enjoyment in every separate transaction, an almost boyish delight in the row for its own sake. In a word, he runs true to the best Puritan type. The sudden surprised yelp of a sinner must be music to his ears, as it is to those of the angels. He must get a lot of fun out of life. His day's work must be almost as thrilling as fighting bulls or burning witches.

Another enviable whooper for rectitude is the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt. One cannot read his Autobiography (*Macmillan*) without being vastly impressed, on the one hand, by the transparency of his demagoguery, and on the other hand, by the high old time he has enjoyed in this vale of tears. Can you imagine anyone having more good sport? Born to ample means, to a taste for adventure and to the gift of gab, he was already a prominent man at an age when most of us are yet immersed in calf love. What is there worth seeing in the world that he hasn't seen—and from a grandstand seat? What is there worth doing that he hasn't done—and with a huge crowd to egg him on? He has been everything that a man of his race and time can possibly be, from acrobat to zoölogist, and in every trade or art or vice or game that he has tackled he has displayed that deceptive facility which is mistaken, nine times out of ten, for towering talent, if not for downright genius. An amateur author, the fates led him into a success which few laborious professionals of the century have ever reached. An amateur politician, he walked full tilt into a situation which made him as powerful as the moss-grown ancients of the craft. An amateur soldier, he ran away with the bays of his superiors. An amateur philosopher, borrowing from all the schools, he in-

flamed the popular imagination with his apparent profundity. An amateur diplomat, he blundered into victories which even a Metternich or a Bismarck might have envied. An amateur in political economy, sociology, chemistry, zoölogy, law, logic, biology and history, he yet blazed and roared his way through every one of them, leaving enchanted multitudes of admirers behind him.

In him, indeed, American superficiality perhaps reaches its apogee. He is the perfect representative of the American spirit. For patience, for thoroughness, for the sober investigation and marshaling of facts, for that scholarly diligence which leads to sound and complete knowledge—for these things, it appears, he has scant enthusiasm. He tells us himself how, in his Harvard days, he revolted against the inevitable drudgery of the laboratory. It was his youthful ambition to be a zoölogist, and he went to college with that aim, but when he found that its accomplishment involved tedious work with slides and sections, he abandoned all orderly study and confined himself to easy reading and field work. It would seem that he really didn't want to *know* about animals, but merely to be able to *talk* about them. This peculiarity of temperament has been perceptible in all his subsequent career.

The frank autobiography of such a man would take its place among the great human documents of all time, along with the celebrated histories of Giovanni Casanova, Carlo Goldoni and Benvenuto Cellini. But in the volume under review, alackaday, the good Colonel is overwhelmed and denaturalized by prudence. It is not the story of his life at all, but merely a defense of his current (and, no doubt, temporary) creed political—in brief, a campaign document. One searches it in vain for the intimate and confidential note. Important and even capital events are passed over in silence. There is no statement of his reasons for going West in 1884; there is only the barest reference to his ill-starred mayoralty campaign in 1886; there is discreet silence



about the bogus contests at the Chicago Convention of 1912; there is beautiful soft-pedaling in his narrative of the Harriman episode; there is nothing but windy stump speaking in his eulogies upon the strange corps of stranger fowl who flapped their wings whenever he crowed in the White House. All that one finds, aside from a few amusing chapters of youthful and Western reminiscence, is an eloquent exposition of the so-called Progressive philosophy and an interminable boasting. In the whole of romance you will find no such angelic amalgam of sage and hero as is depicted here. He has never broken a commandment or made a mistake; his only critics and opponents have been fools and rogues; when he was President the whole burden of the national welfare was upon his shoulders; in so far as things went well, it was due to his supernal sapience; in so far as there was disaster, it was deliberately brought about to injure him. I quote a sample strophe and pass on: "This decision *I caused* to be annulled by the court that had rendered it." He is speaking of the Supreme Court of the United States!

Bulwer-Lytton, as we see him in his grandson's unusually plain-spoken "LIFE" (*Macmillan*), is a no less grotesque figure but with a saving touch of pathos. It is impossible, indeed, to view such a fantastic blend of honorable virtues and imbecile follies without something akin to pity. Whatever Bulwer accomplished in the world was achieved by dint of the most grueling toil. If he made a success of writing books and another of playing politics, it was only because he was willing to do two hard days' work in one. There was not a sign of genius in him, nor even much show of genuine talent. Reading his poems and novels today, one is oppressed intolerably by their *naïveté*, their childish artificiality, their puerile straining after cheap effects. If they are enjoyed at all, it must be by children and the senile: one can scarcely conceive a healthy adult plowing through them. But in Bulwer's day there was a large and eager public for such drivél—and Bul-

wer was sufficiently of that public to give it what it wanted. So he drove his laborious quill day in and day out, in the face of constant ill-health, of money difficulties and of domestic discords that would have tried a saint. And in the evenings he had fresh energy to throw into his parliamentary duties, and so effectively did he woo fame here that he ended a peer of the realm, and was even, it is said, offered the throne of Greece, vacant in 1863.

His grandson's account of him, as I have said, is far from a mere eulogy of his character, nor is there any effort to suppress any of the more painful circumstances of his life. For example, it is plainly stated that the woman he married—one Rosina Doyle Wheeler, a professional beauty—had been his mistress before the marriage, and that she took to drink afterward. So long as they lived together, her wild extravagances kept him on the verge of bankruptcy; from the moment they separated she pursued him with the most abominable slanders. So late as 1864, when he was sixty-one years old, we find him declining a high political office on the ground that she was again making "horrible and nameless accusations" against him, not only in private society, but also to Disraeli, Lord Derby and other statesmen. Bulwer's letters to this precious creature, before and after their marriage, throw curious sidelights upon his baroque personality. He never appears as a sensible man talking to a foolish and vicious woman, but always as one of his own heroes spouting sentimentalities at a Victorian heroine. He never wrote anything worse than these letters, and he never wrote anything more fascinating. His grandson deserves thanks for printing them in full—and no less for printing the rest of his story in full. He was one of the most puzzling of all the tragic comedians of his time. It is pleasant to be able to study him at large and at leisure in these two fat volumes.

The only other biographical book that has reached me of late is "THE TRAGEDY OF MARY STUART," by Henry C. Shelley (*Little-Brown*), a very careful and enter-



taining piece of writing. Chief attention is concentrated, and quite properly, upon the series of events beginning with the murder of Darnley and ending with the catastrophe at Langside, the rest of the sad queen's story being put into a prologue and an epilogue. Passing on to the novels and printed plays (both already showing signs of the vernal efflorescence), I pull up a moment to say a word for various other non-fictional books of merit. For example, "THE CURIOUS LORE OF PRECIOUS STONES," by George Frederick Kunz (*Lippincott*), a veritable encyclopedia of the superstitions and traditions which cluster about such barbaric adornments, with a large number of curious illustrations, some of them in color. And "THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART," by Edward Howard Griggs (*Huebsch*), a praiseworthy attempt to set forth the meaning and function of artistic expression, and the limitations which hedge it round. And "ALASTAIR," by Robert Ross (*Lane*), a truly sumptuous volume of grotesque, Beardsley-like drawings, some of them in color but most of them in black-and-white, by the Russian-Spanish-English-German artist who uses that pseudonym. And "THE BOOK OF THE EPIC," by B. A. Guerber (*Lippincott*), a diligent summary of all the great sagas of the world, from the Odyssey and the Book of Job to "Jerusalem Delivered" and "Paradise Lost." And "WOMEN AND MORALITY," by four authors (*Laurentian Press*), a sharp and devastating attack upon the plupious buncombe that vice crusaders, sex "hygienists" and other such frauds now pour out so copiously. This finishes the so-called "serious" books that I have found readable: the rest may be wise and profitable, but I cannot get them down.

The printed plays of the month include a new volume of Strindberg translations by Edith and Warner Oland (*Luce*), a poetic comedy by Josephine Preston Peabody, and the first two volumes of a series to be issued under the auspices of the Drama League of America. It is sincerely to be hoped that the college town owlshness of the latter organization will not prove a crippling

handicap to its enterprise. The plays it offers at the start are "KINDLING," by Charles Kenyon, and "A THOUSAND YEARS AGO," by Percy Mackaye (*Doubleday-Page*). The first is a serious social drama in the manner of Hauptmann, and though it was probably overpraised when Margaret Illington presented it in New York two years ago, it is nevertheless an honest piece of work, with merit enough to make it stand the ordeal of reading without damage. The Mackaye play is a new variation upon the ancient Turandotte theme, hitherto brought to the stage by Carlo Gozzi, Schiller and Karl Voellmueller. Mr. Mackaye has sought to pay tribute to Gozzi by introducing a troupe of Italian comedians of the eighteenth century *Commedie dell' Arte*—an experiment, it must be said, that is rather more interesting than successful. But there can be no serious quarrel with either of these opening volumes of the series, and if it maintains their level it will be well worth while. Not only current plays, but also unpublished pieces of yesteryear will be included, and there will be translations as well as original works. My personal hope is that Edward Knoblauch's "The Faun" will not be overlooked: a capital piece of comedy. Nor Eugene Walter's "The Easiest Way," now to be had in a private edition only. (Where is that copy you were going to send me, Gene? False promiser! Low-life!) Nor the Hoyt farces. Nor "Shenandoah." Nor the enormously successful folkplays of Paul Armstrong, Charles Klein, Denman Thompson and George M. Cohan.

Mrs. Peabody-Marks's comedy is called "THE WOLF OF GUBBIO" (*Houghton-Mifflin*), and is cast in free verse that is anything but poetic. On page 43 "here" is rhymed with "idea"; on page 142 there is a chorus which consists solely of the word "star" ten times repeated! Such pointless repetitions are numerous. The "prologue," for example, is literally as follows:

San Francisco!  
San Francisco!  
D'Assisi!  
D'Assisi!  
D'Assisi!



I get no joy, I am sorry to say, out of this college yell style of poetry, nor am I much stimulated by the play itself. It deals vaguely with a Holy Night miracle in the little Italian town of Gubbio, seven hundred years ago, and is fortunately impossible of performance. Even worse is "PEACH BLOOM," by Northrop Morse (*Medical Review of Reviews*), a horrible example of the "white slave" drama now so popular. The plot holds fast to the orthodox model. Hildegarde Morris, the young daughter of a college professor, is seized by white slavers on the public street and locked up in their rococo and horrendous den. As usual, a sentimental inmate tries to aid her escape and, as usual, she is held under double guard to await the commands of a wealthy debauchee. But this debauchee, when he bobs up at last, is not her father at all, nor even her brother Jim—wherein, it will be observed, Mr. Morse violates all the traditions of such garbage and plays a joke on its gobblers. The fellow who actually comes in, far gone in liquor and in sin, is the handsome Eric Hamilton, who has proposed marriage to Hildegarde not more than six hours ago. Naturally enough, he draws a six-shooter and fights their way out of the joint, and with equal naturalness the two are married a year later. Such is the ludicrous balderdash that the New Pornography is producing! Such is the sex play at its silliest!

Of the remaining plays, the best are to be found in "SHORT PLAYS," by Mary Macmillan (*Stewart-Kidd*), a series of ten one-acters for amateurs. Some of them are bald and obvious enough, but in one or two I find a very striking merit. For example, in "The Shadowed Star," a grim little tragedy of everyday, with plain indications of the Synge influence. Aside from Synge himself, indeed, not one of the Neo-Celts has done anything better than this in prose. It is delicate, it is fanciful and yet it is thoroughly of the stage. The "FESTIVAL PLAYS" of Marguerite Merington (*Duffield*) are also of sound workmanship, but I fear that their humor and their poetry will be rather beyond the comprehension of the

children playing them. The trouble with "BALBOA," by H. O. Stechhan (*Fly*), is that it is overlong. Prodding the actors with red-hot pokers, it would probably be difficult to get them through it in less than four hours. But it shows care in its presentation of history and a considerable dramatic sense, and it heads in a profitable direction. Why, indeed, have our dramatists been so little attracted by the lush romance of Latin America? So far as I know, Frederic Arnold Kummer has been the only one to explore the field. What gorgeous melodrama the Caribbean towns must have seen in the days of Montbars, Harry Morgan and Bartolomeo de Portuguez! What rip-snorting plays might be made out of their doings today! And what superb grand opera librettos! If you remember the first act of Kummer's "The Painted Woman," can't you imagine Mary Garden in that hammock, plucking a property guitar, cooing a voluptuous *habanera*?

Little space for novels remains; but, fortunately enough, those in hand at the moment are not of a sort to demand copious praise. G. K. Chesterton's "THE FLYING INN" (*Lane*) is extremely amusing for a hundred pages, and less amusing for another hundred, and after that frankly tiresome. As usual, the author battles valiantly for his two pets, Christianity and alcohol, the handmaidens of civilization. All the action revolves around Humphrey Pump, a patriotic English innkeeper, who, when a prohibition law is passed by Parliament, loads his inn sign, a keg of rum and a Cheddar cheese upon a donkey cart and proceeds to flee the constabulary. Every time he stops, he sets up his sign and opens his inn. Upon this framework of farce Mr. Chesterton has hung a vast fabric of paradox and argumentation, in prose and verse. Every character in the story is enormously disputative. There is a Moslem missionary who tries to prove that everything thoroughly English, including even the inn signs, is Mohammedan in origin. There is an oratorical English peer who dreams of an amalgamation of all religions. There is an Irish soldier of



fortune who retires from the throne of Ithaca to do battle for the menaced public house of the British Isles. There are various attendant poets, secretaries, lovely heroines, health faddists, cubist painters and low comedy journalists, all spouting sophistries sixteen hours a day. I think you will like the interludes of song, as I have. Mr. Chesterton has never written more amusing burlesque verse.

H. G. Wells's "THE PASSIONATE FRIENDS" (*Harper*) is not exactly dull, for it would be impossible for Wells to be dull if he tried, but compared to such things as "The New Machiavelli" and "Tono-Bungay" it is certainly lacking in grip and brilliance. It is supposed to be the confession of a young father, written for his son to read in after years, probably as a warning against women. But it turns out to be nothing more than a somewhat incredible tale of intrigue, with the suicide of the woman as its climax. Little of Wells's usually acute vivisection of men and ideas is visible: it is his worst work since he abandoned the Jules Verne romance for the serious novel. Nor is there anything to arouse enthusiasm in "A CHANGED MAN," by Thomas Hardy (*Harper*), a collection of twelve short stories and novelettes, some of them going back more than thirty years. I can find only the commonplace qualities in most of these pieces. At least one better story is in "THE TOE AND OTHER TALES," by Alexander Harvey (*Kennerley*), to wit, "The Toe," itself, a capital example of the grotesque in fiction, well worthy to be set beside some of the sardonic stories of Andrieff. Further on, Mr. Harvey descends to mere horrors, but here, at least, he achieves a really distinguishable piece of work. There is good stuff, too, in the "GRAPHICS" of Harris Merton Lyon (*Reedy*), a book of fifteen sombre tales, original in their point of view and sound in their craftsmanship.

Trade goods! "THE AFTER HOUSE," by Mary Roberts Rinehart (*Houghton-Mifflin*), a chronicle of sanguinary do-

ings aboard a private yacht—three murders by a religious maniac—a total lack of Mrs. Rinehart's customary humor. "OLD VALENTINES," by Munson Havens (*Houghton-Mifflin*), a story of young love—sweet, obvious, flaccid. "THE SPIDER'S WEB," by Reginald Wright Kauffman (*Moffat-Yard*), another contribution to the literature of the uplift, the target this time being the Money Power instead of the White Slave Trust. "THE LAW OF LIFE," by Carl Werner (*Dodd-Mead*), in which we encounter a heroine who swears that she will not marry any man who has lost his virtue—talky, bubbly stuff, soothing to old maids. "THE HAT SHOP," by Mrs. C. S. Peel (*Lane*), an intimate glimpse of the goings-on in such an establishment in the West End of London. "THE WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE," by A. E. W. Mason (*Scribner*), a mystery story by a very skillful fictioneer, hitherto seen as a play. "PIDGIN ISLAND," by Harold MacGrath (*Bobbs-Merrill*), a tale of treasure and amour. "THE GAY ADVENTURE," by Richard Bird (*Bobbs-Merrill*), a fantastic farce in the Locke manner—excellent diversion, indeed, for a rainy Sunday afternoon. "THE DOMINANT PASSION," by Marguerite Bryant (*Duffield*), the story of four geniuses—overwritten, but with its moments. "THE IRRESISTIBLE INTRUDER," by William Caine (*Lane*), the story of a delightful boy.

And so they go, each in its elegant slip cover, each with its chromatic pictures of entrancing heroine and tall, slim hero. This is all we shall have to do with novels, by the way, until June, for May is consecrated to the poets. But before saying good-bye to them, even temporarily, let me commend "AFTER ALL," by Mary Cholmondeley (*Appleton*), a most palatable mixture of the sour and the sweet—the Regina of "Ghosts" set down in the midst of a soothing English countryside—in brief, a tale which meets all the current demand for sexual hazards and deviltries, but is yet saved and mellowed by good humor and good writing.



# THE SPITZBUB' AND THE THEATER

By George Jean Nathan

IT frequently occurs to me to wonder what I, were I a producer or playwright, would do in the case of so many of these airy *spitzbuben* who antic amongst us in the grave masks of dramatic critics.

I freely confess to a bulky bafflement before the problem. It pokes me in the kidney, floors me, squats triumphantly upon my prostrate person. And yet, from my position on the mat, a light seems dimly to bear in upon me. Why protest against their incompetence? Is not incompetence the very bulwark of our current civilization? Why absurdly rail and scream against their mould of intelligence? It isn't sportsmanship. Why institute a bull fight with a cow in the star role? Or engage in a tango with an old woman? In the first place, it isn't any fun—except for the old woman.

One is to be judged by one's indignations. We are to be appraised exactly only through a contemplation of those things that arouse our ire—never, as so many believe, through our pleasures. Therefore, although still lying on the floor with the problem sitting confidently on my stomach, I propose to such suffering managers and playwrights as cannot afford the simpler and more effective solution of half-page advertisements in the several newspapers, a way not only out of the gorse but a way in which to get even as well.

My solution: *Stage their critiques!*

Recently, I made promulgation of a prize of \$100,000 in gold to any person—man, woman, child or actor—who, after reading a number of the late New York newspaper criticisms, could still believe that George M. Cohan was our most

proficient writer of farce. No one came forth to claim the reward. I now repeat the offer. Anyone is eligible to compete—even the owners of the newspapers. I grant, of course, that the farce of the criticisms is unintentional, but the fact that it is unintentional obviously cannot diminish its excellent resident humorous qualities. Some of the best farces of our day have not been intended as such. For example: "The Return of Peter Grimm." For example: "As A Man Thinks." For example: "The Lure." It seems to me, therefore, that if some producer will hire some apt fellow to put the critiques in question into play form, he will thus derive an entertainment as genuinely comical as "The Misleading Lady" or "The Yellow Ticket."

Remember, ladies and gentlemen, the \$100,000 in gold is yours if you can honestly persuade yourselves to believe that these serious critical master minds are not the very *filets de bœuf* of humor, the *croupiers* of comicality, the Cæsars of super-jocosity, the doges of the bean feast. But, lest you imagine that the handsome prize is easily to be won, I make haste to undeceive you.

There was in recent weeks presented in New York a play by H. V. Esmond, a Britisher, called "THE DEAR FOOL." Aside from the circumstance that the play was thoroughly insignificant among even the plays of the existing season, its tale revolved upon a widow woman of forty with two children who, for no subtle reason, commits adultery with a youngster of twenty-two, thereafter forthwith giving him the sack—also for no reason. The woman is then taken with equal celerity into the arms of an admirer who



"understands all—say no more about it"—the whole being buttered with sentimentality and creamed with platitude. Of piquant philosophy, of stinging smartness, of viewpoint and of humor—not a trace, not a smell. No gleam, even intermittent, of psycho-physical understanding; no quickening, pungent satire—nothing save the devout she - sinned - because - she - didn't - know-poor-little-thing. Consequently, as in every such theme where neither fresh argumentation nor a cracking wit is brought to play, a boresome result that is little else than suppuration and smut propelled with scented train oil.

Now, observe, ye who would contest for my premium. One of the critical Magi (sunny little *spitzbub*!) gravely announces this lovely idyl to be "as fresh and welcome as a breath of spring air." Another (Atlas of our drama!) oracles himself thuswise: "A play particularly characteristic and a mellow picture of English manor house life." And another (bogie man of tender young actresses and pasha of billboards!), ever a cicerone of the community's morals, rends the dome of the temple with "Here is a great relief from the white slave plays of the day!" Therefore:

THE CRITICS vs. "SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE."

First Inning

3 to 0 in favor of the Critics.

But halt: the giggle *de luxe*, the guffaw *der grösste*, the chuckle *summa cum* is yet by no means in sight. Indeed, Mr. Cohan's laurels may be said still to be his. But let us proceed. At the Booth Theater was divulged a play entitled "CHANGE," which won Lord Howard de Walden's money for the worthiest Welsh play by a Welsh writer, and which was originally done by the Stage Society of London at the Haymarket Theater. First, let the reader know that one direction of the theme of the play had to do, although not intimately, with labor difficulties in the Welsh purlieus of Glamorgan. Entered then in the parade a valiant Knight of Pythias as follows:

"Why in the world we should be interested in this question (he is speaking in a prefatory way of the philistinism of

the British in matters of art) any more than in these labor troubles of Glamorgan, the results of mixed marriages in Galway (take that, St. John Ervine!) or the habits of Lancashire commercial families (and that, Githa!!) is a question that only the managers can answer."

Inasmuch as, by the same process of argument, there is equally no reason in the world why we should be, or indeed ever should have been, interested in the state of affairs on the Syrian border of Egypt in 48 B. C. ("Caesar and Cleopatra") or in obscure manicure establishments in New Bond Street ("The Gay Lord Quex") or, for that matter, in the philistinism of the British in matters of art ("Trilby"), the labor troubles of Silesia ("The Weavers"), the results of mixed marriages in Venice ("Othello") or the habits of Scandinavian commercial families ("Pillars of Society")—

SECOND INNING

Critics 4: "Seven Keys to Baldpate" 0.

But even yet there may be a chance for Mr. Cohan. Things look dark, to be sure, but let us go on. Thus, then, a Hammurabi anent the same play:

"Why a New York audience should be expected to grasp or comprehend or be in the very least degree interested in a play which dealt so largely in woe and technicalities as 'Change' did is a question which no intelligent (*sic*) occupant of a seat at the Booth could possibly be expected to answer. The play throws no end of light on the dark places of Welsh family life as it is practised and pursued to its bitterest end in the homes of the cantankerous and lowly . . . and that many phases of Welsh character are faithfully denoted there is no doubt . . . but this won't wipe out one iota of all the agony which that poor audience suffered at the Booth last night."

That a New York audience, composed as it unfortunately is of New Yorkers and New York dramatic critics, *does not grasp* or comprehend or is not in the very least degree interested in such a play is only too true and as quickly to be granted—but what of such an observation as "*should be expected to grasp*"



on the part of one hired presumably to direct the public taste? Therefore, in view of this fact, in view of the fact that it so occurred that there did not appear to be any awful suffering on the night in point on the part of the adults in the Booth Theater; in view of the fact that, by the strict terms of this natty critique ("plays that deal in woe" . . . "dark places of life in the homes of the cantankerous and lowly"), such things as Gorky's "Night Shelter," Brieux's "Maternity," Kenyon's "Kindling," Strindberg's "Father," Hauptmann's "Drayman Henschel" and some several hundred similarly atmospherated dramas are for once and all abruptly dismissed—

## THIRD INNING

Critics 5: "Seven Keys to Baldpate" o.

In the new bill of one-act plays at the Princess Theater is a piece called "IT CAN BE DONE," laboriously reiterating the late O. Henry's axiom, mouthed by the celebrated Jeff Peters and familiarly known to almost every reader in the land, to the effect that "of all suckers the New Yorker, who thinks he's the wisest of men, is the biggest." The reader of these pages recalls Jeff's philosophy (page 113, volume, "The Gentle Grafters"; story, "Innocents of Broadway")—"All you have to do anywhere between the North and East rivers is to stand in the street with an open bag marked: 'Drop packages of money here. No cheques or loose bills taken.' You have a cop handy to club pikers who try to chip in post office orders and Canadian money, and that's all there is to New York for a hunter who loves his profession." Announces Atlas, Jr., critically: "Oddly enough, this extremely sophisticated little play is the work of an inexperienced youth . . . who has hit upon an altogether original idea, an idea so fresh that it carries you along at the same rate of speed a train is apparently making." The score:

## FOURTH INNING

Critics 6: "Seven Keys to Baldpate" o.

But restrain your cheers. Throw not yet the cushions and pop bottles into the air. The Princess Theater has included in its current bill Level's familiar Guignol thriller, "Le Baiser dans la

Nuit," translated under the title, "THE KISS IN THE DARK." Posed before the community as nothing save what it was written to be and what, indeed, it successfully is, to wit, a thriller pure and simple, its aim only to whiten the cheek and set the breath a-check, the curtain was hoisted on the spectacle and the critics' portentous decision solicited. Well? That the piece thrilled was admitted. That it accomplished what it was intended to accomplish, ditto. And then, the next morning came the protesting news that it thrilled *too much!* Therefore:

## FIFTH INNING

Critics 7: "Seven Keys to Baldpate" o.

Of the latest Blanche Ring exhibit, "WHEN CLAUDIA SMILES," announced one of the Solomons: "It dragged along saved only by the bright lines with which, like flowers over a corpse, Anne Caldwell has sprinkled the old-time vehicle." Sample of the bright lines—"Why don't you brush your hair?" . . . "Which one, the right or the left?" Wherefore:

## SIXTH INNING

Critics 8: "Seven Keys to Baldpate" o.

Lest twilight soon fall and the game perforce be called on account of darkness, all speed! Good luck to you and a turn in the tide of battle, Sir Cohan, but—

William Faversham, the most intelligent actor in the American theater, in his production of "OTHELLO," sees fit to interpret the role of Iago with a proper feeling for Iago's ever-present sly appreciation of the comic in his acts, as, forsooth, the role of Iago is only fitly to be interpreted. Iago, as everyone knows or should know, is intrinsically, whatever his sporadic external aspects, a fellow given to an appraisal of the humor that resides even in the direst of tragedy—a truth at once made quick by Shakespeare in the prefatory passages of dialogue. Note Iago's exaggeratedly protuberant phrasing of his warning to the awakened Brabantio in the first scene of the play; observe his jocose "I lack iniquity sometimes to do me service" at the very beginning of Scene II; contemplate a



liberal portion of his scene with Roderigo at the close of the act—surely here is a delicious eye-winking, a suppressed chuckle. And yet, protested one or two of the Frey Benitos, did not Faversham go far astray in believing Iago to be such an one? So—

## SEVENTH INNING

Critics 9: "Seven Keys to Baldpate" o.

The advent of a play by Mr. Jack Lait called "HELP WANTED" further increased the lead of the conquering critics, despite the rooting of the Cohan stands. Valiant, indeed, was the work done by the Gentleman Who Can Remember What a Wonderful Performance of Hamlet Rinaldo P. Guzzlehauser Gave at Niblo's Garden in 1846. Observe: "Of fresh characterization or ideas, serious purpose or literary quality, the play has not a trace; of the life which it proposes to reflect, it is the veriest travesty. In a word, it is a box office production of no earthly artistic or dramatic significance. But if there is nothing to be advanced in its favor, *there is little to be said to its positive discredit.*"

The italics are mine. You see, what this critic means is that, inasmuch as the play has not a trace of fresh characterization or ideas or serious purpose or literary quality, and inasmuch as it is the veriest travesty of the life it pretends to reflect, and inasmuch as, in a word, it is of no earthly artistic or dramatic significance—therefore, there isn't much you can say against it! The whole thing is as clear as day. But it will now take mighty strong pulling for George Cohan ever to overcome this tremendous handicap!

Observe again the following from an evening William Hazlitt: "The role of the mother . . . was so splendidly acted by Miss Jessie Ralph that everyone regretted that she was not seen again later on in the play." The peculiarity here being that she *was* seen again later on in the play. Score:

## EIGHTH INNING

Critics 11: "Seven Keys to Baldpate" o.

But let us give up a further contemplation of "dramatic criticism" and talk about something having to do with

the drama. A heavy darkness has fallen and the great game must end for the day. If there be amongst you one who now finds himself honestly entitled to the prize, let him step forth and he shall be duly rewarded.

To begin at the end, this play of Mr. Lait's, setting forth the fable of the awful pitfalls placed by cunning roudés in the way of tender young stenographers in the wicked marts of trade, is a sort of Brieux's "La Femme Seule" with a Chicago accent and a Charles Klein derby. Gertrude is seventeen years of age, in-no-cent, unable to manipulate a typewriter and do stenography, but takes ten dollars a week from a man to act as his typewriter and stenographer and is, therefore, the heroine. Jerrold R. Scott, realizing that Gertrude is poor and needs the ten dollars a week, gives her the position in spite of her incompetence, tolerates her mistakes, treats her with the every consideration which she does not deserve and is, therefore, the villain. The Bernsteinerei begins when the villain essays to kiss our little heroine. Of course, our little heroine howdareyou, shrinks back with palpitating nostrils and commands that Jerrold desist. Jerrold, the villain, declines. He grabs our heroine. Our heroine struggles. Jerrold, the villain, holds her as in a vise. Our heroine screams. In rushes our hero, in other words, the empty-headed, good-for-nothing, stupidly sentimental young stepson. Our hero sees our heroine clutching the edge of the desk and breathing very heavily. He sees the villain standing calm, erect, defiant. "You!" he shouts. "You ——"

Et cetera.

Such tournaments are beyond my humble powers of appreciation. They may, for all I know, go to make vivid, vital, significant drama. They must! I have read several of the other newspaper criticisms of the play and each of these criticisms assures me they do. So there you are. It would seem to my untutored manner of thinking, however, that the Post-mortem juror who still remembers Rinaldo P. Guzzlehauser's wonderful Hamlet at Niblo's Garden



back in 1846 was by way of figuring out the play for its real worth before he became dizzy.

Of chief interest during the sterile days contained in the period of this review was the production of "OTHELLO" hereinbefore referred to. Not, obviously, because of "OTHELLO" the play, but because of the manner of its presentation. Saving the presence of a twain of obsolete grimacers in the roles of Brabantio and the Duke and a stunning exposition of incapacibilities on the part of the Miss Cecilia Loftus as wife to Othello, the exhibition disclosed itself to have been directed by no stage butler knee-crooking to void traditions, no mere inflated actor with one eye on the good will and eulogies of (the late) William Winter and the other on the endorsement of the Drama League, but by a student of the theater possessed of taste, a literary conception, a general artistry and the desire to do something well for the sake of its well-doing. Although I am scarcely one of those who arbitrarily visits praise upon a Shakespearean production just because it is a Shakespearean production—the regular pastime of all educated boneheads, critics who capitalize "dignity," stage uplifters and liars in general—here is a Shakespearean production that holds and interests even an outspoken person in spite of its being a Shakespearean production. Confidentially (no one is listening), how many such exhibitions do as much? . . . Um, then we agree.

\* \* \*

Aside from the excellent thriller already recorded, an appropriate and smartly built shocker wherein a man, blinded by vitriol at the hands of a spurned mistress, lures the latter to his side and pours his searing revenge, drop by drop, into her bursting eyeballs, the Princess program is as usual as the hushed pause always indulged in by actors in a play before they speak the word "dead," as the belief on the part of playwrights that a man proposing to a woman always stammers and stutters and as the similar playwrighting belief that whenever a human being exclaims "I hate you!" or "I just can't!" he

never under any circumstances contents himself with exclaiming it once but must always repeat it, as—"I hate you! I hate you!!" or "I just can't! I just can't!!" We find in the bill the usual confounding of pistol shots with drama, sentimentality with sentiment, pretty scenery with plays.

"THE NEGLECTED LADY," from the French of the versatile Max Maurey, is the venerable commonplace of the two apartment house squabblers who pretend to the invading janitor that they have merely been rehearsing their parts in a new play. The piece has neither novelty nor skill in treatment to recommend it. A hundred and one immensely superior foreign plays—plays of the same general mien—were readily available, did the directing intelligences of the institution know their trade. Need one point to any more, forsooth, than Sil Vara's "Pierrot's Drama"? Here a fresh, artistic, delighting thing—and, lest one be charged with too idealistic tendencies, "box office stuff" (as I believe the popular quality in plays is termed by the strange folk of the theater) as well. "THE HARD MAN," by Campbell MacCulloch, is an echo out of Ambrose Bierce's "Tales of Soldiers and Civilians." General lays revolver on table before traitor. "If you are a man, you know what to do." Traitor shoots himself. "Who was he?" asks bystander. General drops his head. "My son," says General.

Some day a playwright is going to make a name for himself by writing a military play in which the two leading male characters are not related to each other. As things stand to date, these two characters are and most always have been father and son, or brothers, or (where the Confederate villain is called upon to deceive the fair Virginia Randolph in the second act by telling her the Federal hero is responsible for her young brother Pitney's capture) cousins. This is probably in line with the superstition enjoyed by nine playwrights in nine that all men whose occupations keep them out of doors are heroes and all men whose occupations keep them indoors either downright



villains or harmless fluffs. Inasmuch as the play under discussion contains, in addition to the sensationally novel idea described, the standard joke, "He's not a newspaperman; he's on the London Times," its selection as a part of the program was probably to be expected.

"THE FOUNTAIN," by C. M. S. McLellan, is the conventional statue-of-the-girl-come-to-life-in-a-dream thing. The scenery is full of poetry. The play is not. Consequently, the newspaper reviews of the play were extremely favorable, its poetic qualities being especially lauded. Although I frankly admit that, although a New York critic, I am prejudiced against such a lack of mentality, originality and fertility as is so courageously maintained by this theater in the face of its lofty posturings, I desire not to seem to assume the usual critical attitude of mere dirge master. Consequently, to indicate to the directors of the institution that such a thing as a combination of decent art and practical box office returns is possible, I would suggest to them the following bill of plays. (If they are unable to read French or German I shall be pleased to have my colored man, Eustachio, translate for them. He is, however, at liberty only in the afternoons between four and five, being occupied the rest of the day creasing my trousers and translating the English used in the latest "new American plays" for me.) The program:

"PIERROT'S DRAMA," by Sil Vara. (comedy)

"DURING THE ARMISTICE," by M. A. Charmain. (military drama)

"SABOTAGE," by Hellem, Valcros and d'Estoc. (thriller)

"NICK CARTER," by Tom Barry. (fantastic comedy)

"A NIGHT OF LOVE," by Hennequin and Basset. (risqué melodramatic farce)

The first named is Hungarian, the second, third and last are French and the fourth is American. It will be observed, moreover, that I have exercised the precaution to suggest plays of the precise dramaturgic form arbitrarily utilized in the current Princess bill. To indicate, furthermore, that the selection of a moderately intelligent, artistic, novel and yet thoroughly prac-

tical program of plays should be a very simple matter even for anyone who knows nothing at all about the business, I submit a second bill:

"THE ACTRESS," by Ferenc Molnar. (comedy)

"THE CRACK REGIMENT," by M. R. Francheville. (military drama)

"THE TIN KING," by Joseph Renaud. (thriller)

"THE HAPPY HYPOCRITE," by Max Beerbohm. (fantastic comedy)

"JOYS OF THE OPEN AIR," by M. Narval. (risqué melodramatic farce)

And what of such happy satires as Giacosa's "The Strings" and Wedekind's "Court Tenor," of such exquisite fantasies as Hofmannsthal's "Death and the Fool," of such capital short plays as the "Lottie's Birthday" of Ludwig Thoma, treating of a young girl's introduction into life, as the several one-acters of Schnitzler, as the "Stradivarius" of Max Maurey (produced at the Comédie Française half a dozen years ago), as the "Poor Fool" of Herman Bahr (the idea of which is that no man has the right to suggest plans to other persons and ask the latter to conform to them, a play, consequently, which would seem to settle *me* very effectively), as Felix Salten's biting pieces that make up the cycle called "From the Other Shore"—as these, in brief, and the countless others like them?

Kindly observe that, realizing a theater may unfortunately not well be run for "art" alone, and that it must pay its way at the very least, I have refrained from any so-called "high-brow" (I believe such is the word I have heard used by theatrical folk) posings. On the reverse, have I suggested only such plays as might be filtered with no undue strain into the New York playgoing intelligence, yet plays which, compared to the second-rate vaudeville promulgated in the name of thrilling novelty by the Princess Theater, are as dew to dough.

In the play "CHANGE," which met your vision fleetingly several pages ago, one approaches a work calling for a serious and considerate attention. This despite the perfectly patent defects of a repetitious and weakening thematic



construction of a portion of the last two of its four acts, of the trite theatricality of its building to an act-climax out of the Schiller "Maid of Orleans" species of description of conflict in the distance, of the lack of fertility indicated in the handling of several of the post-prefatory incidents. But above these defects the play lifts with a ringing sincerity, a tonic moderation in the manipulation of its theme and a penetrating and natural interpretation of its introspective ingredients. With a general underlying thread of similarity to "Rutherford and Son," "Milestones" and "The Younger Generation" so far as these pieces have to do with a revivification of the ever-familiar "revolt of youth against age" thesis, to the "Honor" of Sudermann with its clash of ideals upon traditions, truth upon hypocrisy, and to "The Three Sisters" of Tchekhov with its Moscow ever unattained—breathing again the atmosphere of the Hauptmann of "The Weavers" in its labor phase and the surge and fury and futility of the struggling "Youth" of Joseph Conrad—"CHANGE" embroiders anew from these many old-as-time yet new-as-time patterns a poignant pity for the lonely mother, as all mothers, losing her sons to the world once manhood is theirs (the world probably symbolized in "Riders to the Sea" by the devouring ocean), the vicious, teeth-showing fight of age to hold its own against the inevitable knockings at the door, the hot idealism of blood-red youth and—in the end—the inevitable reversion to the preface of things, the whirling round again of the circle with all as before. True enough, here little more than a playing again of the early Ibsen music of "Brand," a blast again upon the clarion horn of Nietzsche, but better far an old and tuneful melody than such "up-to-date" selections upon the comb and tissue paper as "Help Wanted" and like psalms of absurdity. The so-called "gloom" of this play, aside from the cheerlessness of its single set of scenery depicting a bleak room in a Welsh cottage, would seem to consist chiefly in the complete absence from the dramatic manuscript of such cher-

ished comedy relief\* as "Have you any suggestions as to the music you would like to have played at the dinner this evening?"—"No, except that we want them to play something loud during the soup course," and "Is she a decided blonde?"—"Yes, she decided on the color last week."

All one has to do to build a musical comedy these days is to find somebody who can play a violin. The rest is absurdly simple. Have a "dramatic climax" in which the violin is smashed to pieces in a fit of rage or melancholy, or in which the lovers separate after a misunderstanding, the tenor hero thereupon consigning himself musically to Maxim's (if his mood be one of bravado) or to the solace of the wine glass at home (if his mood be one of sadness and the scene be dark, with the lights of the town visible in the distance through the window). Remember always to have the leading waltz of the score played or sung on a stage lighted softly with the pink gelatine slide right and the purple gelatine slide left and always to include in the libretto an epigram comparing something with olives, as for example, "Love is like an olive—a matter of taste" or "Marriage is like an olive—you must get used to it." Anything strikingly clever, as one of these, will do. Then hire a stage producer who will put on the reception room scene as if the action were passing in a gymnasium—and you're ready.

In its fundamentals, "THE LAUGHING HUSBAND" responds to the established ritual. When I reviewed this piece last summer in Berlin (ah, Hulda, in whose sarsaparilla eyes the Spring lies dreaming!), I persuade myself, in the light of a second audition, to believe my treatment of it to have been a bit harsh. True, its libretto was heavy with the commonplace, its music, while adroitly scored, of no pricking novelty of phrase, and its critic (in Berlin) unduly mellow from an audience with the hops, yet, as these shows go nowatimes, its critic (in New York), in no such interesting condition alas, perceives it as one above the native average.

\*Relief from comedy.



# SOMETHING PERSONAL

By the Publisher

THE present issue is designed primarily to amuse and entertain, and a considerable proportion of its contents consists of humor in some form. In all of its pages will be found nothing that is depressing or sordid; the material was selected and arranged in the main with a view to emphasizing the bright and cheerful side of life.

Magazine buyers, like the patrons of every other line of present-day enterprise, are looking for freshness and variety; and wise editors are constantly studying the taste of their readers. There are fashions in literature as in furniture, clothes, automobiles and everything else. Sex, in the exaggerated form to which it recently degenerated, is a dead issue—although the relationship of man and woman, delicately and sanely treated, will never cease to be humanity's most interesting problem. What subject will be the next great literary craze no one can foretell. The romantic story—of lords and ladies and deeds of chivalry—may again get an inning. Mystery stories, detective stories, historical stories, psychological stories, business stories, adventure stories—any one of these or a dozen other types may come in for a brief vogue.

But humor is eternal. And variety is the greatest of all magazine make-up virtues. And pathos and sympathy and the grip at the heartstrings and the excitement of well sustained suspense and the glow of surprise and thrill at a dramatic and logical denouement—these are elements of magazine literature that have no season, that will compel attention and prod a jaded reading taste so long as the printed word shall speak a message to the human mind. And the great stories of everyday life that strike home with their lessons to the individual heart are as firmly planted, as literary fundamentals, as the Pyramids.

THE SMART SET has abandoned the sort of fiction which, though approved by literary men and critics, many readers last year criticized as sordid and pessimistic and unnecessarily realistic and plain-spoken. Cleverness will be emphasized; surprises and thrills and bright, witty dialogue will be given a place. We believe that life can be made an agreeable journey through a land of ever-new and surprising delights rather than a sorrowful pilgrimage through scenes of gloom and hopelessness; and THE SMART SET is going to do its share to this end.

*But we do not intend to be goody-goody nor substitute namby-pambyism and a colorless negative virtue for real strength and literary vitality.* We shall publish stories that represent life in all its phases. Some of these phases are gloomy and unpleasant, though we believe that there is more of joy than gloom in life after all, if people will only make it so.

In succeeding numbers we shall probably not give quite so much prominence to humor. The serious side of life will be depicted—now and then a tragedy—occasionally a real thriller that will send a shiver up the reader's spine; but all properly balanced, so that he will lay down the magazine with a sense of having experienced a pull at his emotions from many directions, and a feeling of final satisfaction at the cumulative effect. An announcement of the May number will be found on the pages following the table of contents in this issue.





## Eyes, Cheeks and Lips

Reflect One's Health as a Mirror

The precious blood current—when pure and laden with vitality—is Nature's greatest beautifier.

Thoughtful mothers who know this simple truth, that health and beauty depend upon pure blood—largely a matter of proper food and drink, use

# POSTUM

regularly as their table beverage instead of coffee—there's a reason.

Coffee has no food value, but contains caffeine—a drug—most harmful to stomach, liver, kidneys and bowels; and a common cause of dull eyes, sallow cheeks and lips that lack the red blood of health.

Postum, made only from wheat and a small portion of molasses, has genuine food value—the pure nutriment of the grain. It is free from caffeine or any harmful substance.

***“There's a Reason” for Postum***

—sold by Grocers everywhere.





## The Vogue of the Tea Cup



You will be greatly pleased with this fragrant and refreshing tea, which so completely meets the requirements of the discriminating hostess—Ridgways “H. M. B.” (Her Majesty’s Blend). Once it is served no other will be considered.

You and your guests will appreciate to the full its piquant aroma and delicate flavor—protected to the last leaf by air-tight tins. Ask your grocer to send you a package— $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$  or 1 pound—at \$1. a pound.

Superiority is assured—as with all blends of

# Ridgways Tea

RIDGWAYS, INC.

111-113 Hudson St.  
New York  
301 No. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, Ill.



## NABISCO

Sugar Wafers

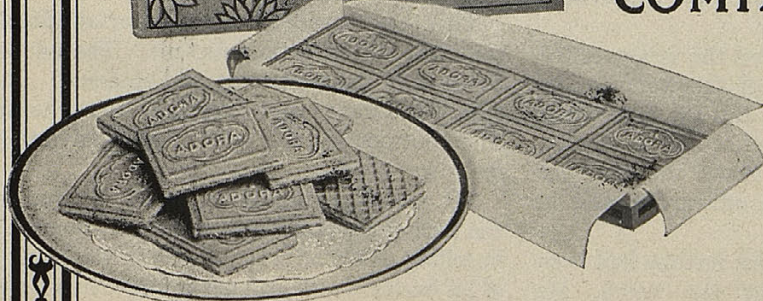


**T**HESE incomparable sweets are the most universally popular of all dessert confections. Whether served at dinner, afternoon tea or any social gathering, Nabisco Sugar Wafers are equally delightful and appropriate. In ten-cent tins; also in twenty-five-cent tins.

## ADORA

Another dessert delight. Wafers of pleasing size and form with a bountiful confectionery filling. Another help to the hostess. In ten-cent tins.

NATIONAL  
BISCUIT  
COMPANY





# Romances of Modern Business

**T**HE American romance is in the large office-buildings and the marts of trade; it is the romance of great achievements in commerce, in industrial leadership. And it is a wonderful romance! The child of the world's nations is leading them!—ARNOLD BENNETT.

## CHAPTER II

### How Time Was Sent Ticking Around the World

THIS story tells how the world was helped to measure its time. It is an interesting story, well worth a volume. It is about the Ingersoll dollar watch.

We first see two farmer boys from Michigan, with a small loft in Fulton Street, in New York City, selling rubber type and other small things of their own invention.

Then we turn a few pages and view these same rustic lads transformed into the executives of a business with its arms reaching to all corners of the earth.

Robert H. Ingersoll and his brother, Charles, by peddling their specialties, had worked up a small trade in New York. One day the elder boy noticed a small clock hanging on the wall of an office he visited. The young man saw a vision in that clock.

Its works were machine-made and, therefore, inexpensive. He believed they could be made small enough to fit into a watch-case. He knew that a watch so made could be sold at a small price and would meet a universal need.

Young Ingersoll requested the maker of the clock to reduce the size of the works. The suggestion was ridiculed. But the farmer boy did not mind being laughed at and worked on the model himself. The result was that the first Ingersoll watch was offered for sale in 1893.

Ingersoll believed that his fortune had been made when he completed the watch. He knew that there were hundreds of thousands of citizens walking up and down in the United

States at that very moment who would be glad to pay a dollar for such a watch.

But how was he to reach these people, how acquaint the public with his product? The co-operation of dealers could not be enlisted; they preferred to sell higher-priced watches. So months passed in the little loft in Fulton Street.

The psychology of advertising had impressed itself on Robert Ingersoll when he had read a small weekly magazine that reached the Michigan farm. He decided to insert a small advertisement—the smallest that would be accepted—in a magazine.

Enters now a magazine advertising manager. He had seen the small announcement and perceived the commercial possibilities of a dollar watch. He found two young Western men in a small loft with a big commodity and not knowing what to do with it.

Then the Ingersoll brothers listened to what seemed like a fairy story to them. They should take a quarter-page of space in the magazine and great success would be theirs.

This they considered a too uncertain financial risk. They were reluctant. The advertising man was persistent and eloquent. Ingersoll's courage fattened on the other's vision. The contract for the quarter-page advertisement was given.

"It was like staking an entire fortune on the turn of a wheel," said Robert H. Ingersoll, in telling of this crucial episode in the history of his business. "I can never forget that time. From the day the contract was made and the copy O.K.'d, until the magazine came



## How Time Was Sent Ticking Around the World

out, three weeks later, we waited with bated breath.

"The first day's mail after that magazine had reached its readers brought us fifteen hundred dollars' worth of orders. From then on business increased as we broadened our magazine advertising campaign. The world's time used to be measured by a bell, a sun dial, or a steam whistle, but now Ingersoll watches have ticked their way around the world and the world measures its time by them."

It is only a little more than twenty years since the Ingersoll watch was placed upon the market. Today it is used throughout the world. Thirty-five million watches have been sold. Fifteen thousand are manufactured and shipped daily.

After Colonel Roosevelt returned from his African trip, he told Mr. Ingersoll that in some places of the Dark Continent he found his fame resting on having come from the sameland where the Ingersoll watch was made.

Robert Ingersoll, now the president of a great industry, often has wondered what he and his brother would have done if the magazine advertising manager had not walked into their office and directed their course.

Today the course would be perfectly obvious. A young firm with something that everyone wanted would find some way to buy space in the magazines and tell the public about it.

But this was in a day before high-power magazine publicity had attained its present efficiency.

The advertising manager showed them how to tell the entire world of their watch, how to reach the thirty-five million men and women who today are using Ingersoll watches. From a loft in a New York building the news of this dollar watch being made spread throughout the world. A direct avenue of success was opened through the pages of the national magazines.

Great as the Ingersoll watch is, and great as was the latent demand for it, its history could not have become one of the most stirring romances of modern business life if it had not been written, chapter by chapter, month by month, in the advertising pages of the American national magazines.

And the public service promoted in the development of an industry such as Robert H. Ingersoll & Bro. must not be overlooked. Thirty-five million men, women, and children of many nations of the world have been enabled to measure their working and playing hours by a correct timepiece. They have become more correct and businesslike; their lives have been made more orderly and systematic.

Mr. Ingersoll started out to give the world a dollar watch, and, despite the increased price of labor and materials, still is turning out a dollar watch. And the world has been made the better for it.





# THE BELL-COW

"A Magazine for Those Not of the Herd"

Contains for APRIL an Unusual Essay by

**WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT**

Called "AMERICA: The Spiritual Experiment."

**JANE BELFIELD**

Is also a Contributor.

It is the big little magazine.

To all who subscribe before April Fifteenth, a copy of H. L. Mencken's "THE GIST OF NIETZSCHE," which retails for Sixty Cents, will be sent free.

*The Subscription Price is One Dollar a Year, or Ten Cents a Copy*

**THE BELL-COW CO.**

CAXTON BUILDING

CLEVELAND, OHIO

# AROUND THE WORLD

**Independent Trips**  
**\$620.65 up.**

**First Class Throughout**

See the uttermost ends of the earth, strange and beautiful lands, curious and fascinating peoples. There is no better education. Europe, Mediterranean, Egypt, India, Ceylon, Java, China, Japan, Philippines, Australia, Hawaii. *Tickets good two years. Start any time, any place, either direction; the price is the same.*

**Travelers' Checks Good All Over the World.**

Write for

"Journeys Around the World" Booklet.

**OELRICHS & CO., Gen. Agts.**  
5 Broadway, New York  
H. Clausenius & Co., Chicago  
Central National Bank, St. Louis  
Alloway & Champion, Winnipeg  
Robert Capelle, San Francisco

**NORTH  
GERMAN  
LLOYD**

# Club Cocktails



**WHEN** you say, "Here's how" over a Club Cocktail, you attain the ultimate in good drinking.

Because Club Cocktails are the finest drink in the world. They're smooth and mellow, with the rare fragrance of selected old liquors, expertly mixed and aged in wood. Order your particular kind from your dealer today.

**G. F. HEUBLEIN & BROTHER**  
New York      Hartford      London





# Diamonds on Credit

Loftis "Perfection"  
Diamond Ring

This Diamond Ring is our great special. It stands alone as the most perfect Diamond Ring ever produced. Only the finest quality pure white diamonds, perfect in cut and full of fiery brilliancy, are used. Skillfully mounted in our famous Loftis "Perfection" 14 solid gold 6-prong ring, which possesses every line of grace and beauty. This is the Diamond Ring she wants.

No. 659 is Our Big Leader. Price \$50. **\$5**  
**TERMS, PER MONTH**

Our large Catalog shows the Loftis "Perfection" Diamond Ring in many different sizes and prices. Also all other new, fashionable mountings. Send for Catalog. It is free. Write today.

**LOFTIS** Diamonds, Watches, Jewelry  
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His Gift, That She  
Will Always Cherish

# Watches on Credit

Our handsome 116-page illustrated Catalog may truly be called the "Book of Bargains." All the new, popular styles in Jewelry are shown — gorgeously beautiful Diamonds, artistic solid gold and platinum mountings — exquisite things — that sell in some cash stores at double our prices. Our watches, too, are big bargains. Select anything desired and

**Let Us Send It to You on Approval**

If satisfactory, send us one-fifth of purchase price as first payment, balance divided into eight equal amounts, payable monthly. We pay all delivery charges. Send for Catalog today—NOW. Don't delay.

**A Diamond is the best investment you can make**

Diamonds increase in value 10 to 20 per cent each year. A diamond is the ideal gift for the loved one. We give better values and easier terms than any house in America.

Stores also in: PITTSBURGH. ST. LOUIS. OMAHA.

## Popular Educational Food Campaign

Eggs in wrong combination and an excess of starchy (paste making) and fatty foods make people sluggish and cause dull, splitting headaches, lack of memory and concentration, drowsiness and inertia. A complete change to "digestible" brainy foods (suitable meat, game, fish and suitable dairy foods, combined with suitable vegetables and fruits according to the new brainy food plan) produces the most marked improvements in a few weeks.



G. H. BRINKLER  
Food Expert

## Brainy Diet

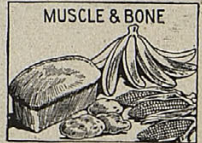
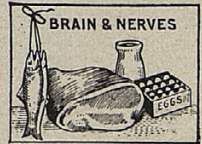
A thin man, after being out of work nearly a year through weakness, was restored in three weeks to hard work as a carpenter at full pay. In such cases the change from wrong combinations of foods, an excess of starchy, cloggy, death producing foods to energizing foods causes a literal transformation.

Another person, deaf in the right ear, owing to a discharge caused by an excess of mucus making foods (cream, butter, cheese, etc.) completely eliminated the catarrh thereby restoring his hearing by taking correct combinations of suitable foods.

A case of kidney and bladder trouble of ten years' standing was saved from a surgical operation, and the objectionable discharge relieved within ten days, because the loss of control was due entirely to the constant irritation from certain irritating foods and drinks.

Prurigo or "Itch" chronic, beyond the remedies of doctors and skin specialists completely disappeared within three months.

A chronic sufferer, weighing 415 pounds, unable to exercise, reduced over 150 pounds (in public life, under many witnesses), gained strength and firmer flesh, and lost rheumatism.



Tomatoes, Lemons, some fruits are solvents: Green Vegetables are laxatives, etc.

## Over 100 similar cases certified by Official Investigating Committee

During nineteen years of personal experiments, I have learned to produce in myself rheumatism, catarrh, sore throat, tonsilitis, constipation, on double chin, swollen glands, kidney troubles, shortness of breath, rough scaly skin, dandruff, sores, boils, pimples with white pus, blackheads, rash, and other symptoms at will by eating of different classes of foods in excess for several days or weeks according to the symptoms desired. AND I CAN RESTORE MYSELF TO GOOD HEALTH IN A FEW DAYS BY OORREOT DIET. The foods which cause expectoration, catarrh, cough, constipation, tumors, etc., are specified in my booklet which has taught many to cure themselves.

"The New Brainy Diet System" sent for 10 cents. Send Addresses of Sick Friends to

G. H. BRINKLER, Food Expert, Dept. 10d. Washington, D. C.



Mary Elizabeth

**Candy Shop  
and Tea Room**

A Charming Restful Spot in  
New York City and Boston

NEW YORK  
291 Fifth Avenue

BOSTON  
3 Temple Place



# Unseen Forces Behind Your Telephone

THE telephone instrument is a common sight, but it affords no idea of the magnitude of the mechanical equipment by which it is made effective.

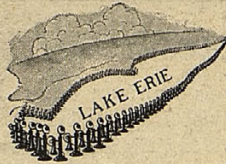
To give you some conception of the great number of persons and the enormous quantity of materials required to maintain an always-efficient service, various comparisons are here presented.

**The cost of these materials unassembled is only 45% of the cost of constructing the telephone plant.**



## Poles

enough to build a stockade around California—12,480,000 of them, worth in the lumber yard about \$40,000,000.



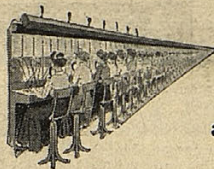
## Telephones

enough to string around Lake Erie—8,000,000 of them, 5,000,000 Bell-owned, which, with equipment, cost at the factory \$45,000,000.



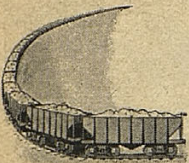
## Wire

to coil around the earth 621 times—15,460,000 miles of it, worth about \$100,000,000, including 260,000 tons of copper, worth \$88,000,000.



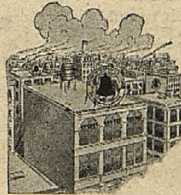
## Switchboards

in a line would extend thirty-six miles—55,000 of them, which cost, unassembled, \$90,000,000.



## Lead and Tin

to load 6,600 coal cars—being 659,960,000 pounds, worth more than \$37,000,000.



## Buildings

sufficient to house a city of 150,000—more than a thousand buildings, which, unfurnished, and without land, cost \$44,000,000.



## Conduits

to go five times through the earth from pole to pole—225,778,000 feet, worth in the warehouse \$9,000,000.



## People

equal in numbers to the entire population of Wyoming—150,000 Bell System employees, not including those of connecting companies.

The poles are set all over this country, and strung with wires and cables; the conduits are buried under the great cities; the telephones are installed in separate homes and offices; the switchboards housed, connected and supplemented with other machinery, and the whole Bell System kept in running order so that each subscriber may talk at any time, anywhere.



AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY  
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES

*One Policy*

*One System*

*Universal Service*





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WORLD'S LARGEST STEAMSHIPS

**IMPERATOR**

919 Feet Long, 52,000 Tons

**VATERLAND**

950 Feet Long, 58,000 Tons

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**Paris**

**Hamburg**

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May 16	June 6	August 1	August 22

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During June, July and August  
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**Land of the Midnight Sun**

Great Cruise of 1915


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Through the PANAMA CANAL

reaching **San Francisco** at the opening of the  
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*Send for Illustrated Booklet*



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